Building Conversations

Facilitator Guide

An Australian Government Initiative

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Foreword

The Australian Government is committed to supporting national efforts to reduce harm caused by drugs in our society and to our young people. The *REDI – for Parents* resource, aims to build the capacity of school communities to engage with and support parents to nurture students' learning, health and wellbeing. *REDI – for Parents* is part of the REDI – Resilience Education and Drug Information suite of resources, a collection of multimedia drug education resources developed for Australian schools under the National School Drug Education Strategy.

REDI – for Parents recognises the importance of families to the academic success, health and wellbeing of their child/ren. It bases its approach on international resilience research that highlights the importance of promoting young people's sense of connectedness to school and family to buffer them against a range of harms, including those associated with drug use. Productive partnerships between schools, family and the community can provide young people with real benefits across the school years and beyond.

REDI – for Parents is the latest addition to the ground breaking REDI resources. The REDI resources are the first Australian school drug education resources that focus on preventing and reducing harm from drug use by building more resilient young people. Australian and international research shows that young people who have strong relationships – with their friends, family, school and within their community – are more resilient. Resilience is the ability to cope with and bounce back from life's challenging and difficult experiences. It can help our youth deal with life stresses and instill in them the confidence to deal with issues and problems that may arise in their everyday life, including those relating to drugs.

Building Conversations is designed to help schools bring together learning activities for student and family participation at one or more parent event/s, as part of the school's approach to drug prevention. ***Building Conversations*** provides a range of learning activities, including video/DVD triggers, allowing young people and their parents/families to come together to explore and discuss challenging issues and develop their capacities for solving problems and communicating with each other. It also includes professional development for adult facilitators/teachers and event organisers, to help plan, prepare, run and evaluate the event.

I commend this important resource to you and trust that it will build the capacity of school communities to engage with and support parents through strategies that nurture students' learning, health and wellbeing.

JULIE BISHOP MP
Minister for Education, Science and Training
June, 2006

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Building Conversations is based on the positive outcomes of and incorporates activities from the *Creating Conversations* programme published in Victoria in 2002. Enquiries about *Creating Conversations* should be addressed to the Targeted Initiatives Unit, Victorian Department of Education and Training, GPO Box 4367, Melbourne Victoria 3001.

The following schools contributed to the production of the REDI – for Parents resource:

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Overview

Introduction

Welcome to *Building Conversations*, part of the suite of resources in the REDI – for Parents resource. This resource has been designed to support interaction and communication between parents and students in the middle years of schooling on issues of health and wellbeing, particularly in relation to drug-related harm, within the context of a parent event.

This guide helps school communities plan such events and provides a range of activity options where students can be involved to help effectively engage their parents in discussions about drugs.

***Building Conversations* has been designed:**

- **for the middle years of school**

Students in the middle years of school (Years 5–10; ages 10–16) span the developmental continuum from late childhood to early adulthood. Through this stage of transition, students have a range of personal, intellectual, physical, social and emotional needs. Parents and their children can experience a number of challenges in their relationships as they seek to adjust to the developmental changes of early adolescence.

- **for flexible use**

Building Conversations has been designed for flexible use across different types of school contexts and ideally will be used as part of a larger strategy for enhancing the health and wellbeing of young people within the school community through student and family participation.

- **as a school-based programme**

Building Conversations is a school-based programme where school staff, parents, community leaders and students can work together to facilitate parent events about drug issues using a range of interactive strategies to meet their school context and needs. It provides a flexible approach to what the event might include and how it might be run. You can select activities that promote strong student involvement and facilitation within the planning and running of the parent event through to activities that require less student involvement and resourcing. The level of student participation and facilitation at the parent event will depend upon a range of factors, including the school context, students' stage of schooling and resourcing.

What's in this resource?

This resource consists of:

1. This Facilitator Guide:

As well as this overview, the Facilitator Guide includes:

- ***Part 2: Planning your event***

  Part 2 sets out the guidelines and options for engaging students, families and community members in your parent event/s, and provides professional development for planning and preparing for your event.

- ***Part 3: Parent event activities***

  Part 3 sets out a range of activities your school might use to run a parent event, and provides some professional development considerations and tips for the activities.

- ***Part 4: Further resources***

  Part 4 includes additional resources to support professional development and your parent event.

2. The accompanying video/DVD

The video/DVD (90 mins) includes:

- ***Professional development (58 mins)***

The professional development section includes three segments:

– Hot Seat
– Hidden Thoughts
– Peer Coaching

These demonstrate:

– specific techniques for preparing for and working with students before a parent event

– facilitation methods for adult facilitators (teachers and/or other adults) working with students and adults at a parent event.

It is strongly recommended that you review these segments when planning and preparing for your event. The strategies they demonstrate are applicable to any of the activities that may be undertaken.

Video segments are identified by title and time code and DVD segments are identified by title.

- ***Triggers (10 min 30 sec; 12 mins)***

This section includes triggers that can be used at the parent event to initiate parent-centred activities (to complement and/or replace activities led by students). These triggers form the basis of Activities 1.1, 2.1 and 3.1, described in this guide.

Aims

Building Conversations aims to:

1. promote an integrated and collaborative approach to addressing the needs of parents and students in reducing drug-related harm within the school community
2. provide strategies and activities that school communities can adapt to their particular context to plan and run parent events as part of a broader and sustained school drug education strategy
3. support school communities in engaging parents and students in meaningful learning activities as part of supporting the health and wellbeing of young people within their family and school contexts
4. nurture the resilience of students through enhancing understanding and communication between parents and their children as well as connectedness to family and school.

Resilience and *Building Conversations*

Research has identified a number of protective factors that contribute to the resilience of young people and their capacity to cope well with challenging events and transitions. Through nurturing resilience, young people have more resources to support them in 'bouncing back' from stress and adversity.[1] Young people who have a number of protective factors in their lives are less likely to engage in long-term risky behaviour, including problematic drug use. *Building Conversations* seeks to foster resilience in young people by supporting stronger connectedness to family and school. Through creating opportunities for student involvement in planning and facilitating a parent event as well as participating in discussions with parents on drug-related issues, students, their families and the broader school community can strengthen their relationships.[2]

In particular, *Building Conversations* seeks to foster the three key components for nurturing resilience and reducing drug-related harm in young people:

1. Caring relationships

Building Conversations provides opportunities for young people to develop relationships with fellow students, parents, teachers and community representatives through planning and engaging in a parent event. The activities in *Building Conversations* support positive communication and relationships between students and their parents.

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[1] Wolin, S. and Wolin, S. (1999) *Project Resilience* (http://projectresilience.com).

[2] Meyer, L. and Cahill, H. (2003) *Principles for School Drug Education*, Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training, Canberra, in particular, see Principles 4 and 5.

Parent and community involvement in the event can also nurture a sense of belonging and connectedness for students, their families and the broader school community.

2. Meaningful participation and contribution

Building Conversations provides opportunities for youth participation and meaningful contribution to the school, family and school community. It can foster a sense of responsibility and encourage students to learn and engage with their families around core issues that affect their health and wellbeing.

3. Setting high but achievable expectations

Involvement in planning and facilitating the event can also provide opportunities for young people to be acknowledged and respected for their contribution. In particular, *Building Conversations* can provide opportunities for students, who may not always have academic recognition, to demonstrate their skills and capacities in a school community project.

Rationale

Building Conversations has been designed in response to the following evidence:[3]

- Parents are powerful figures in influencing the behaviour of young people.[4]
- A parent education component in a school drug education programme can make an important contribution to reducing drug-related harm in young people.[5]
- Young people view parents as a very important and necessary part of any drug prevention strategy.[6]
- Open communication between parents and their children influences the extent of adolescent drug use.[7]

[3] State of Victoria (2002) *Creating Conversations Training Manual*, Student Wellbeing Branch, Department of Education and Training, Melbourne, Vic, p 3.

[4] Ballard, R., Gillespie, A. and Irwin, R. (1994) *Principles for Drug Education in Schools: An initiative of the School Development in Health Education Project*, Faculty of Education, University of Canberra, ACT.

[5] Dusenbury, L. and Falco, M. (1995) 'Eleven components of effective drug abuse prevention curricula', *Journal of School Health* ,Vol 65, No 10, pp 420–424.

[6] Cohen, D. and Linton, K. (1995) 'Parent Participation in an Adolescent Drug Abuse Prevention Program', *Journal of Drug Education*, Vol 25, No 2, pp 159–169.

[7] Fuller, A. (1998) *From Surviving to Thriving, Promoting Mental Health in Young People*, ACER Press, Melbourne.

- Young people are vulnerable at times of transition in their life. The shift from primary to high school and through adolescence to adulthood is significant and can cause both anticipation and concern for parents and their children.
- Parents can support the capacity of their children to cope during times of challenge and transition and nurture their resilience through effective communication and caring relationships.
- A warm, positive relationship with at least one responsible adult (preferably a parent) is a protective factor helping to build resilience in young people.[8]
- Interventions are most likely to create change if they are based on the experiences of the young people they are trying to influence.[9]
- Drug prevention events based purely on information and instruction can add to anxiety, while the opportunity to communicate often eases anxiety.[10]

As noted in the Acknowledgments, *Building Conversations* is based on the positive outcomes of the *Creating Conversations* programme, which uses a youth participation model to engage students in drug education learning activities that culminate in an event for parents, facilitated by students.

In addition, *Building Conversations* includes:

- a range of activities for parents and families of students aged from 10–16 years
- a professional development component to support and enhance the skills of school staff when working with students and families around drug education activities
- further activities through which to engage parents.

[8] Fuller, A., McGraw, K. and Goodyear, M. (1998) *The Mind of Youth Resilience – A Connect Project*, Victoria, p 2.

[9] McBride, M., Midford, R. and Farringdon, F. (2000) 'Alcohol harm reduction education in schools: Planning an efficacy study in Australia', *Drug and Alcohol Review*, No 19, pp 83–93.

[10] Department of Education, Employment and Training, University of Melbourne Youth Research Centre; Education Image (2000) *Get Wise: Working on Illicits in School Education: drug education resources for schools and their communities*, Section 3: Guidelines and Resources for School–Parent Collaboration', available from Curriculum Corporation (http://www.curriculum.edu.au/).

Considerations when preparing and running a parent event

Before undertaking the activities in Part 3, it is recommended that school staff:

- read and engage with Part 2 of this guide
- view the 'Professional development' segment of the video/DVD
- consider the specific issues and tips accompanying each activity in Part 3 of this guide.

For more information on the REDI – for Parents approach, see *Strengthening Family–School Partnerships* in this resource.

Note: Much of the information in the following section has been obtained from *Get Wise*, Section 3: Guidelines and Resources for School–Parent Collaboration, p.16.[11]

In recent years, substantial work has been undertaken in the development of drug prevention programs which empower and give a voice to young people and parents alike. While each school will need to make decisions about the nature and extent of its work and partnerships with parents, the following guiding principles could be considered when planning and implementing any type of meetings, events and activities around drug-related issues, including *Building Conversations*.

Parents want their children to be safe

- They want to support their children.
- They appreciate the opportunity to discuss with other parents strategies which increase the safety of young people.
- Communication on drug issues is important to both young people and their parents.

Parents' perceptions and values differ greatly

- At any gathering of parents, a diverse range of values and attitudes is likely to be represented.
- Values and attitudes are not necessarily right or wrong, good or bad, they are simply different.

Parents' understanding of drug-related issues is influenced by a variety of factors

- Access to relevant and accurate information.
- Their confidence when dealing with drug-related issues that affect their children.
- Drug prevention events based *purely on information* and instruction which have added to their anxiety.
- Sensitivity about their own drug use.

Many parents of older children may believe their children already know more about drugs than they do. Many parents come to drug prevention

[11] ibid.

events/meetings to seek guidance and support. The opportunity to communicate will often ease anxiety.

Parents may be concerned about a range of drug-related issues

- Lack of understanding of actual drug use by young people (ie most young people participate in safe activities/behaviours).
- The laws related to drug use, including a lack of understanding of these (eg in relation to the possession and/or consumption of alcohol by minors).
- Perceived lack of effort to 'stop' drugs.
- Changing family structure (what mum/dad is allowing).
- Changing technology (text/msn invitations).
- Drink-driving.
- (Fear of) party behaviour by their own or other children (based on anecdotal and/or direct experience).
- Lack of understanding of school policies (eg in relation to school-sanctioned functions).
- Impressions of young people's behaviour based on television/media.

These may be exacerbated in some culturally and linguistically diverse communities by a lack of familiarity with Australian cultural practice and norms and a desire to adhere to their own cultural practice and beliefs.

Young people have legitimate views

- Young people's participation in an event will encourage parents to attend.
- Adults who speak on behalf of young people can sometimes misrepresent their views.
- Given an appropriate format and some preparation, young people are often the best people to articulate their issues.
- In some communities young people may not feel able to speak honestly in front of parents.

Planning your event

Introduction

In this part, you will find information to support your school in planning and running a successful parent event. It has been designed for teachers and, as appropriate, school community members to work with students to prepare a parent event. To this end it provides information on:

- making a collaborative parent event happen
- choosing a programme for the event
- facilitating the event.

The focus is on supporting schools in their consideration of possible options and strategies to meet their own needs and context.

In particular, schools will need to determine the extent to which:

- students are involved in the planning and facilitating of the parent event and their level of involvement
- activities from *Building Conversations* are integrated into the school curriculum
- the parent event is part of a broader strategy to engage and sustain family partnerships within the school (which will influence how the event is designed, promoted and implemented)
- parents and community members are involved in the preparation and facilitation of the event and how this will be managed with teachers and students also involved in the event.

Making a collaborative parent event happen

There are any number of ways to make a collaborative parent event happen. Below is an outline of an approach you may choose to help you plan and run your event. It is organised into four main steps:

1. ***Getting started*** – establishing the goals, forming a support team and deciding on the approach to the parent event.

2. ***Planning, rehearsing and organising*** – engaging student, staff and community representatives in planning, rehearsing for and implementing the event.

3. ***Running the event***.

4. ***Reflecting on the outcomes*** – evaluating the event, learning from mistakes and deciding what's next to build on what has been achieved.

1. Getting started

Clarify the aims and benefits of the project

From the outset it is necessary to consider what you want to achieve through the parent event. It is important to set realistic and achievable goals and identify the benefits for the school community.

The broad aims of the event described in *Building Conversations* are to provide:

- an understanding of the benefits of using a positive approach to communicating within families on drug-related issues
- an opportunity to discuss and explore feelings and concerns about drug-related issues with students, other parents and school community leaders in a supportive environment
- information and some skills and strategies to support confident, effective communication within families on drug-related issues
- advice/information on opportunities for families to further develop their skills to nurture resilience and wellbeing in their children
- advice/information on agencies and networks that might provide further assistance for those seeking it on drug-related issues.

Building Conversations has been developed so that a parent event can be provided within the broader topic areas of 'transition' and 'parenting skills'. The activities deliberately focus on the challenges and excitement of early adolescence, high school and beyond, with the potential for discussing a range of possible harms, including drugs.

Some goals for an event might include greater participation of parents in the school, increased communication between parents and students, or that parents and students feel more comfortable discussing drug-related issues.

Also, consider if the parent event will be:

- a targeted 'drug prevention' event
- couched within an event that covers a broader topic area
- included in the agenda for an orientation or curriculum night.

(See also 'Promote the event' at p16.)

Identify stakeholders and form the event team

Early on, identify and enlist the support of other staff members, parents, support personnel and community agencies that are interested or could assist with the project. Talk to relevant groups in the school such as the Family–School Action Team, or Welfare Committee. This enables the event to be linked to the school's broader drug education strategy and/or other school commitments and programs.

Decide which student groups will be involved in the event

The student groups that might be involved in the event can be chosen from a variety of groups:

- **A whole class or subject group**. If a whole class is involved in developing and implementing the event, class time and space can be used to discuss and rehearse the students' roles. This automatically engages all students, as they can be involved in a range of roles. In addition, if it is part of the curriculum, it is more likely to become regular practice in the school.
- **Student volunteers**. By selecting or inviting students to participate, teachers can encourage participation among students who do not readily involve themselves in other school activities. Inviting students to participate in a role that their peers consider to be important, or which is associated with humour, can encourage students to participate. Students themselves are often in a good position to nominate others who are normally reticent. Inviting students also allows a diversity of students and range of year levels to contribute to the event.

  This approach generally requires either the allocation of non-class time or withdrawal of students from classes. It is important to manage any potential disruptions and keep people informed.
- **Students from a range of classes and year levels**. Involving students from a range of classes and year levels provides an opportunity for peer-led activities.

Decide on the approach the event will take

Some core decisions will need to be made about the overall approach, in particular:

- The type of student involvement. In most cases, encouraging communication between young people and parents is one of the main goals of a parent event, so it makes sense to involve students in the programme. Student involvement can also enhance the event because it adds realism and focus. (See also 'Types of student involvement' at p 15.)
- Who will facilitate? Will there be parent and/or community participation in facilitating the event? (See also 'Parent and community member involvement' at p 15.)
- Who will be invited, for example expert speakers. Research suggests that in the classroom, brief interventions by external drug educators are likely to be ineffective and may lead to increased experimentation with drugs. However at parent events, an expert speaker can add authority and credibility to what the school wishes to say. Promoting the participation of an expert speaker can also generate interest in the event and boost attendance.
- What is required to meet the needs of families in the school community? If the approach and content of the programme

See also 'Work with students and adult facilitators to prepare for and rehearse event activities' at p 14, which covers selecting classes and students to participate.

meet these needs, the profile of the project will improve and the likelihood of its future sustainability in your school will be increased. (See also 'Culturally inclusive conversations' at p 16.)

On the following page, you will find a checklist that may be useful in identifying the various actions to help get you started on making your parent event happen.

Checklist 1: Getting started

Item	Yes/no	Action required
1. The intended aims and benefits of the proposed parent event have been identified.		
2. The proposed parent event fits within the school's drug education strategy.		
3. The proposed parent event complements other initiatives for enhancing the health and wellbeing of students and the broader school community.		
4. The aims and approach for the proposed parent event meet the needs of families in the school community.		
5. The extent to which the proposed parent event will focus on parenting skills has been identified.		
6. The student year/s and classes that the proposed parent event best suits have been identified.		
7. How this project integrates with other curriculum activities for these students has been identified.		
8. The level of student participation in running and facilitating the event has been identified.		
9. The level of parent/community involvement in planning and facilitating the event has been identified.		
10. The stakeholders (ie those who will be interested in the project and can help provide support and momentum) have been identified.		
11. An expert speaker/community representative will be invited to participate. If 'yes', his/her contribution has been identified.		

2. Planning, rehearsing and organising

Set a date and develop a detailed agenda for the event

Set a date for the event which allows enough time to develop the selected activities into a programme that will meet the agreed aims and benefits.

If the event involves strong participation by students and community members, as well as discussion and rehearsal, it is very important to allow adequate time to undertake this. It is also important to allow sufficient time for any other required professional development, especially if the selected activities are unfamiliar.

Develop an agenda for the event, allowing time for guest speakers, activities, discussion, questions and answers, and breaks. Some issues to consider include the following.

- If expert speakers participate, discuss ways they can contribute to and complement the aims of the event. For example, you may include a speaker with expertise or a commitment to young people, drugs, success or parenting issues. Allow them brief input (20–30 minutes) as well as time for follow-on activities and to address school issues.
- Remember that people need time to talk to others.
- Avoid an agenda which turns into talking at parents all night.

The accompanying *Building Conversations* video/DVD provides two 'guest speakers': Dr John Toumbourou who is a leading researcher and authority within Australia on drug use and young people; and Dr Leanne Rowe, a GP who specialises in youth health and has been on national task forces for drug prevention. (Interview with Experts, 01:01:17:00 to 01:01:06:00; 01:12:36:00 to 01:17:24:00.)

Work with students and adult facilitators to prepare for and rehearse event activities

Brief all facilitators in advance, particularly on any issues you think parents might be anxious about. (See also 'Facilitating the event' at p 25.)

Work with students in rehearsal of activities in preparation for the event. Providing this support will help ensure that the programme meets the needs of families in the school community, improve the profile of the project and increase the likelihood of its future sustainability in your school.

The accompanying *Building Conversations* video/DVD includes professional development to support and refine facilitation skills before the event takes place.

Types of student involvement

Students might be involved in the planning, presenting, facilitating and housekeeping at the event in a range of ways, as illustrated in the following table:

Planning	Presenting	Facilitating	Housekeeping
• to help identify activities • to assist in the smooth running of the event (catering, decoration, posters) • to organise, design and distribute invitations	• to take part in role-plays and dramatic improvisations • to take part on student panels and to answer questions	• as small group facilitators • to provide a young person's perspective	• as ushers/ greeters • providing refreshments • staffing the information kiosk • behind the scenes (sound and lighting, runners)

Planning and housekeeping roles might suit students who are less confident with public speaking or role-play but are still keen to take an active role in the process.

Students involved in presentation within some activities might be required to take on a character role and put themselves in the shoes of another person. In some cases this may require the student to learn the role of the character and provide thoughts to an audience.

Students involved in facilitating an activity require knowledge about the activity and training in directing the process. Some activities require simple instructional skills while others require a more skilled level of directing a group discussion.

Each type of student involvement can be undertaken by students at various levels.

You can refer to the accompanying *Building Conversations* video/ DVD (00:03:07:00 to 00:17:44:00) to view an example of the activity 'The Hot Seat', where students prepare and perform roles within a scenario.

Parent and community member involvement

Parents and community members can participate in the activities in much the same way as students. Those who take on a role that requires preparation and rehearsal will need to attend training sessions. If this is not the chosen option, adults can participate in the event in other ways. Many of the activities provided in this resource are designed with this in mind. For example, the Hot Seat activity provides opportunities for parents from the audience to participate.

It is important to remember that some adults will not feel comfortable about participating in character roles.

Some strategies to assist *students* to participate in a parent event and activities to undertake are presented in 'Choosing a programme for the event' (p 28); they can also be viewed in the accompanying *Building Conversations* video/DVD (Professional Development, 00:02:57:00 to 00:59:16:00).

Some strategies to assist parents to participate in a parent event and activities to undertake are presented in 'Choosing a programme for the event' (p 28), and can be viewed in the accompanying *Building Conversations* video/DVD (Professional Development, 00:02:57:00 to 00:59:16:00).

If parents and community members are involved in facilitating and/or role plays, it is useful to keep a balanced approach so that students are not excluded. Some of the most powerful learning for parents can happen in watching adults and students working together in a performance. A parent playing a student role and a student playing a parent role can lead to some interesting insights and discussion.

Culturally inclusive conversations

Note: Information in this section has been adapted from *Creating Conversations, Training Manual*, p 8.

When working with culturally and linguistically diverse parent groups and indigenous communities, it is important to keep in mind:

- parent drug education for culturally and linguistically diverse and indigenous communities should be specifically designed to recognise cultural needs and practices
- parent drug education should be respectful and sensitive to culturally and linguistically diverse and indigenous backgrounds
- conducting activities in other languages requires considerable effort. It is important to build relationships with culturally and linguistically diverse parents, be mindful of parenting styles in some cultures, and adapt material to acknowledge cultural differences.

For more information about Family–School Action Teams, see *Strengthening Family–School Partnerships*, in this resource.

A sample invitation is included in Part 4 (see p 129).

Promote the event

The Family–School Action Team and student facilitators are in a good position to plan and undertake the promotion of the event.

Invitations to parents and community members should be sent out well ahead of time and through the usual channels, such as school newsletters and parent bulletins.

Within the school, activities can be demonstrated at a staff meeting, to a health class or at assembly, to raise the profile of the event within the school community.

Note: Much of the information in the following section has been obtained from *Get Wise*, Section 3, pp 18–19.

The following strategies can help boost attendance:

- pre-publicise the event through newsletters, the school website, posters around the school, local radio and parent organisations

- set up a buddy programme where each parent is encouraged to bring another parent along (especially useful in culturally and linguistically diverse communities)
- ask the students to invite their own parents with a written invitation
- translate correspondence into other major community languages
- utilise other networks such as local sporting clubs
- contact the local media
- use telephone trees.

How you describe or 'title' the event may have an impact on the success you have in encouraging attendance. For example, calling it a Drug Prevention Evening may dissuade some parents and community members from attending because they may:

- feel uncomfortable addressing the topic in the company of other parents and prefer a more confidential environment
- think their attendance implies they or their children have a drug problem
- think their children will never use drugs and not understand the relevance of the event.

As a result, many schools couch their drug education events within a broader topic area such as 'Parenting Skills', 'Helping Your Teenager Cope With Adolescent Challenges' or 'Rethinking Drinking'. Other schools have found that talking about drug education at commencement nights or curriculum nights, where it is just one aspect of the programme discussed, is more successful. Thinking about the success of other parent events at the school should guide a decision about an appropriate title.

Consider how current parent concerns, feedback and issues can also influence the content and title.

Develop show bags / take-home resources

A useful support is to provide families with take-home resources such as an information kit or show bag. This might include the REDI – for Parents *Parent Pack* contained in this resource as well as information about local services that provide support for parents and children. Your local municipal council will have a services directory which may list drug and alcohol services.

If a show bag is to be developed, members of the student group are in a good position to plan and organise this. They might, for example, contact agencies and discuss the suitability of any pamphlets for inclusion in the show bags.

Organise housekeeping for the event

Smooth running of an event will be enhanced by good planning and communication of housekeeping issues. Housekeeping might include:

- selecting a venue which is comfortable and friendly – this may be outside the school
- providing refreshments – utilise your school community resources and your student group (see above)
- providing translations of materials into other major community languages
- inviting interpreters where possible so that all language groups are included.

On the following page you'll find a checklist that may be useful in identifying the various actions to help plan, rehearse and organise the parent event.

Checklist 2: Planning, rehearsing and organising

Planning

Item	Yes/no	Action required/comments
1. A suitable date and time for the event (which allow sufficient time to prepare for the event and promote it) have been chosen.		
2. An agenda for the event has been developed.		
3. The activities to be included have been identified and sourced (eg *Building Conversations* adaptations and/or original activities).		
4. Appropriate professional development of school staff and parent representatives has been undertaken.		
5. Adequate time, space and people have been allocated to rehearse and develop the activities.		
6. Student roles in planning, presenting, facilitating and housekeeping have been identified.		
7. Parents and/or community member involvement and roles have been identified.		
8. Show bags will be provided. If 'yes', students are involved in collecting and developing information for the take-home resources.		
9. Feedback forms will be available at the event. If 'no', decide how feedback will be collected (see Checklist 4 on p 24).		
10. Translation services are required for the materials.		
11. Interpreting services are required at the event.		
12. The venue has been determined, is available and is suitably furnished for the smooth running of the event.		
13. Refreshments will be included as part of the event. If 'yes', we have a strategy for making this relevant to other issues on the night, such as safe partying.		

Rehearsing

Item	Yes/no	Action required/comments
1. Students involved in the event have rehearsed their roles.		
2. Adults involved in the event have rehearsed their roles.		
3. Activities will be presented to a staff meeting or Parent Representatives meeting. If 'yes', to whom and when?		

Organising

Item	Yes/no	Action required/comments
1. Students involved in the various activities (including promoting the event) are carrying out their duties.		
2. There are (at least) three strategies to promote the event (eg a notice in the school newsletter, posters made by students are displayed around the school, student invitation to parents).		
3. Refreshments are organised.		
4. Show bags have been developed.		
5. Feedback forms have been developed.		
6. Materials have been translated.		
7. Interpreting services have been organised and there is a person responsible for this.		
8. Students will write 'Thank you' letters to our special guests.		

3. Running the event

Run a successful event

A committed team supported by the school executive, as well as thorough work undertaken in the previous steps, will go a long way towards the event achieving its aims and sustaining the planned benefits.

For more information about running a successful event, see 'Facilitating the event' at p 25.

On the following page, you will find a checklist that may be useful to help with logistics on the day of the parent event.

You'll find sample agendas in 'Choosing a programme for the event' (p 28), and a sample running sheet for an event in Part 4.

Checklist 3: Running the event

Item	Yes/no	Action required/comments
1. The venue is suitable and organised (keys, furniture, heating/cooling).		
2. The technology and presentation materials are organised and have been tested (ie they work!).		
3. The agenda for the event is clear and everyone involved has a copy.		
4. A watch or clock to keep track of time is available.		
5. Parking has been arranged and is suitable and safe.		
6. Special guests have been given a courtesy call and know where and when to arrive.		
7. Interpreters and other community representatives have been invited and have all the details required to find the venue, etc.		
8. Greeters have been briefed to arrive half an hour early.		
9. Participants have been briefed and are prepared.		
10. Childcare arrangements are in place and are suitable and safe.		
11. All props are organised and a nominated person is responsible for them.		
12. There are more than enough pens and paper for the audience.		
13. There are more than enough show bags for the audience.		
14. Refreshments are organised and caterers have everything they need.		
15. Garbage removal and cleaning is organised.		

4. Reflecting on the outcomes

Review and evaluate the event

Evaluation of the event is strongly recommended so that you can determine if it has been effective.

Evaluating the event is an important way to:

- check its usefulness
- obtain feedback as to how it might be improved upon next time
- inform future activities or communication.

Evaluation should be planned so that the appropriate materials are available to distribute at the event, and time for this is allowed in the agenda.

Students can play a role in helping develop and distribute these documents, and in assessing the feedback.

Part 4 of this guide contains an evaluation form that can be adapted to your school community context.

Learn from mistakes and build on successes

After the event it is a good idea to:

- collate the feedback to see what worked well and what didn't work so well, and what you might do next time
- reflect on the event in a debriefing that involves key planners and facilitators (such as the student group, facilitators and the Family–School Action Team, and teachers)
- continue to provide opportunities for your student group to use the skills they have developed through this exercise.

You will find information about establishing and maintaining a Family–School Action Team as part of the school's approach to drug prevention in *Strengthening Family–School Partnerships*, in this resource.

On the following page you'll find a checklist that may be useful in identifying the various actions to help evaluate and reflect upon the outcomes of the parent event.

Checklist 4: Reflecting on the outcomes

Item	Yes/no	Action required/comments
1. Expected outcomes to be evaluated are clear.		
2. Feedback will be sought from:		
• parents		
• student participants		
• staff members		
• other community participants		
• the Family–School Action Team		
• other (identify).		
3. The evaluation questions will provide information to help enhance:		
• future parent events		
• student participation and curriculum activities for enhancing their health and wellbeing		
• the school's approach to drug prevention		
• family–school partnerships.		

Facilitating the event

Although students may take a very strong role in participating in and facilitating particular activities, it is important that at least one adult oversees and provides the facilitation of parent discussion and activities. Facilitating events around drug-related issues requires sensitivity.

The accompanying *Building Conversations* video/DVD provides professional development around parent event activities. It includes three segments which demonstrate specific techniques for working with students *before* a parent event, and facilitation methods to utilise *during* the event. The segments are:

1. Hot Seat (00:03:07:00 to 00:23:24:00)
2. Hidden Thoughts (00:23:24:00 to 00:46:31:00)
3. Peer Coaching (00:46:31:00 to 00:59:16:00).

It is strongly recommended that you review these when planning and preparing for a parent event, as the strategies they demonstrate are applicable to any of the activities undertaken in such an event.

Role of the facilitator

Note: The following section has been adapted from *Talking It Over, Facilitator's Manual*, p 4.[12]

As a facilitator it is important to:

- be prepared to answer difficult questions (and if you don't know the answer, say so)
- tell the audience how long the evening will go for and broadly what will be covered
- advise the audience you will be asking them to take part in some participatory activities
- be reassuring and factual, not alarmist
- be sensitive to the size of the group – don't attempt complicated activities with a large group
- be sensitive to the different needs of the audience.

Before facilitating an event, facilitators should:

- engage in accurate drug education in class (student facilitators)
- engage in adequate professional development

[12] Cahill, H. (1999) *Talking It Over, Facilitator's Manual*, Commonwealth of Australia, Life Education Australia, Potts Point.

- determine and support others who will be involved in the planning and development of activities for the event
- clarify with presenters (role players/panellists, etc) the extent of their roles
- clarify how student and adult facilitators will interact
- have sound knowledge of the information component of the event
- be aware of the possible sensitivities associated with the topic of the event
- be aware of the possible range of cultural, religious and personal views on issues related to parenting, families and drug use, and encourage those attending not to pass judgment on others
- have a very clear understanding of the expected outcomes for the event
- be equipped to manage questions and comments from the audience and participants
- be familiar with protective interruption techniques and know how to employ them to protect participants from making inappropriate personal disclosures
- understand that the role of the facilitator is to raise questions for thought and discussion rather than pass judgment or advice on 'good parenting' decisions
- understand that the facilitator's role is not to provide counselling or comments on individual stories.

Facilitating conversations between students and parents

When balancing student and parent or adult participation, it is important to keep in mind that the purpose of involving students in the events is to:

- increase interaction between young people and parents
- allow shared discussion.

The role of student participation is not meant to be performance-based only, and indeed the activities are not meant simply to 'entertain' the audience.

It is important to keep in mind that each activity is designed to create and enhance conversation between the group members and in many cases both the material and input of young people acts as a trigger for this. The role of the facilitator is to ensure that the conversation is centred on a particular topic. Many of the aims of the event can be achieved through the sharing of conversation.

Facilitating culturally inclusive conversations

"When facilitating drug education activities cross-culturally, there are a number of things to consider:

- drug concepts may differ between cultures
- use of some drugs may be acceptable in some cultures, but unacceptable in others
- different cultures may have varying beliefs about the health effects of drug use
- there may be generational differences regarding drug use, drug choice and broader issues, and these may increase communication problems between young people and their families.

When working with culturally and linguistically diverse parent communities, the following strategies are suggested:

- present information in a culturally sensitive way using the appropriate languages, and demonstrating an understanding of the participants' cultural contexts
- use interpreters who understand the topic, issues and sensitivities
- use drug and alcohol workers from the same cultural communities."[13]

Sensitive issues

Some aspects of activities around drug-related issues may be considered sensitive and controversial. Opportunities should be provided for young people and parents to explore their values and understandings in a safe and supportive environment.[14] At a parent event, be aware that some people:

- may be reluctant to take part in participatory activities
- drink alcohol and some may not consider it to be a drug
- smoke tobacco; they may feel defensive or uncomfortable about this
- may know or suspect that their children are misusing drugs
- may have direct or indirect experience of legal and/or illegal misuse of drugs
- may be over-influenced by information – and misinformation – from the media.

There may be participants at the event who:

- wish to share their own or others' experiences
- try to dominate the discussion.

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[13] *Creating Conversations, Training Manual*, p 9.

[14] Meyer, L. (2003) *Your choice, a Year 11 and 12 drug education resource for pastoral care programs*, Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training, Canberra.

Ground rules

Just as it is important to establish ground rules with students when undertaking drug education activities, it is also important to make the ground rules clear at a parent event to avert situations which may derail what you are trying to achieve. Some examples of ground rules include:

- respecting a person's right to privacy by not using their name when talking about experiences
- listening to and respecting others' beliefs and opinions
- being allowed to stay silent.

Young people and their parents should avoid revealing personal information in the group setting. Setting clear ground rules at the beginning of the parent event is the best strategy. Below is a possible introduction to the parent event which does this:

> *In this program we will deal with general concerns and we will talk about fictional scenarios. We will not be discussing children or families known to people in the room. This is to protect people's privacy in a public forum.*
>
> *Should you have any specific questions or concerns in relation to a particular person or any questions or concerns which are not addressed during the evening, we invite you to follow this up at the end of the evening or to use the school's welfare personnel or one of the support or information agencies referred to in the material provided.*[15]

Protective interrupting

Should disclosure occur during the event, the facilitator will need to interrupt the speaker tactfully but firmly, acknowledging that he/she has heard the speaker and indicating that the school counsellor or relevant community agency is available to talk about it in a more appropriate and confidential setting.

Choosing a programme for the event

In Part 3 of this guide you will find 15 activities you might select from to build your own *Building Conversations* programme.

- Eight of these activities are appropriate for use across the span of adolescent development from Years 5–10. These are signified by the icons and .
- Three of the activities are designed particularly for late childhood/ early adolescence, and would be appropriate for a parent event involving students from Years 5–7 and their parents. These are signified by the icon .
- Four of the activities are designed particularly for early to mid-adolescence, and would be appropriate for a parent event involving students from Years 8–10 and their parents. These are signified by the icon .

[15] Adapted from *Talking It Over, Facilitator's Manual,* p 7.

The activities presented in Part 3 of this guide are organised into four main types.

1. **Icebreakers** – These activities provide an opportunity for people to get to know others and to help set the scene. They can be used to initiate discussion at an event and assist parents to explore their attitudes and values.
2. **Information sharing** – These activities provide opportunities for developing understanding and knowledge on drug use and prevention.
3. **Problem solving and communication skills** – These activities support parents in developing understanding and skills in communicating with their children around drug-related issues.
4. **Help-seeking** – This activity can provide parents with information on where to access further information/support.

You may decide to plan a series of parent events and therefore select and adapt the activities so that you can build a programme of student and parent engagement over a period of time.

Note: It is not possible or appropriate to include all the activities at a single event, so choose those that best suit the needs and priorities of your students, families and overall school community. Experience suggests that a programme of approximately two (2) hours works well.

Table 1 provides an outline of the range of activities from teacher/adult-focused to student-focused. Please note that these are intended to support your school in the determination of its preferred approach in response to its particular needs, time and resources.

Student-focused activities are likely to take more preparation time and involve working with students to plan and rehearse their roles. However, if these activities are integrated within the school curriculum and programme planning this may not require additional resources.

Table 1 is followed by some sample parent event agendas which show how the activities might be undertaken in different school contexts and stages of schooling.

Table 1: Outline of activities

Activity types/aims	Activity options				
	Teacher/adult-focused ⟷				Student-focused
1. Icebreakers To provide a range of activity options that can be used to set the scene, initiate discussion at the event and assist parents to explore their attitudes and values	1.1 Vox Pops (Years 5–7) (Years 8–10)	1.2 Highlights and Challenges of Being a Parent (Years 5–10)	1.3 Agree or Disagree (Years 5–10)	1.4 Challenge Ranking Game (Years 5–7) 1.5 Harm Ranking Game (Years 8–10)	1.6 Transition Panel Activity: 'Bouncing into Secondary School' (Years 5–7) 1.7 Hypothetical (Years 8–10)
2. Information sharing To provide a range of activity options that can be used to inform parents' understanding and knowledge on drug use and prevention strategies	2.1 Video Trigger – Interview with Experts (Years 5–10)		2.2 Reality vs Myth – Factually Speaking (Years 5–10)		2.3 Quiz (Years 5–7) 2.4 Drug Quiz – Myth Busters (Years 8–10)
3. Problem solving and communication skills To provide a range of activity options that can be used to support parents in developing understanding and skills in communicating with their children around drug-related issues	3.1 Video Triggers (a) Can I Go To Sharis? (Years 5–7) (b) Why Won't You Let Me Pick You Up? (Years 6–8) (c) Did You Get Drunk? (Years 8–10) (d) Can I Go? (Years 8–10)		3.2 The Hot Seat (Years 5–10)		3.3 Hidden Thoughts and Peer Coaching Discussion (Years 8–10)
4. Help-seeking To provide information on where parents can access further information/support	4.1 Parent Pack (Years 5–10)				

Sample agendas

Sample agenda 1: Years 5–6 with limited student participation

This agenda would be appropriate for an event for parents and families of students in Years 5–6; it involves limited student participation.

ACTIVITY	FACILITATED BY	SUGGESTED TIME
1. Introduction Brief discussion outlining the purpose of the evening	School Community Personnel – Principal/teacher/parent representative	5 min
2. *Icebreaker (1)* Highlights and Challenges of Being a Parent (Activity 1.2)	Adult[16]-led with students facilitating small group work	15 min
3. *Icebreaker (2)* Agree or Disagree (Activity 1.3)	Adult-led with students facilitating small group work	15 min
4. *Information sharing* Video Trigger: Interview with Experts with follow-up activity (Activity 2.1) *or* Presentation by invited expert	Adult-led discussion	20 min
Break – light refreshments		10–15 min
5. *Problem-solving and communication skills* Video Trigger: Can I Go To Shari's? with follow-up activity (Activity 3.1(a))	Adult-led discussion	25 min
6. *Help-seeking* Parent Pack and discussion (Activity 4.1)	Adult-led with student support	5 min
7. Conclusion/Evaluation	School Community Personnel – Principal/teacher/parent representative	10 min

[16] "Adult" here refers to the lead adult facilitator of the event who is likely to be a teacher; but where appropriate this role might be shared by a number of school staff and parent representatives who have the relevant knowledge and skills.

Sample agenda 2: Years 6–7 with high level student participation

This agenda would be appropriate for an event with a high level of student participation and a strong focus on transition issues. It would work well where there is a mix of upper primary and lower secondary students who have perhaps worked together in a peer education programme.

ACTIVITY	FACILITATED BY	SUGGESTED TIME
1. Introduction Brief discussion outlining the purpose of the evening	School Community Personnel – Principal/teacher/parent representative	5 min
2. *Icebreaker (1)* Highlights and Challenges of Being a Parent (Activity 1.2)	Students facilitating small group work	20 min
3. *Icebreaker (2)* Transition Panel activity: 'Bouncing into secondary school' (Activity 1.6)	Led by students and other adults	20 min
Break – light refreshments		10–15 min
4. Information sharing Quiz (Activity 2.3)	Led by students and run as a TV quiz with parent contestants	20 min
5. *Problem-solving and communication skills* The Hot Seat (1): (transition focus) with facilitated audience discussion and skills practice (Activity 3.2)	Performed by students with facilitated discussion by the adult/student	30 min
6. *Help-seeking* Parent Pack and discussion (Activity 4.1)	Adult-led with student support	5 min
7. Conclusion/Evaluation	School Community Personnel – Principal/teacher/parent representative	10 min

Sample agenda 3: Years 8–9 involving student participation

This agenda would be appropriate for an event for parents and families of students in Years 8–9; it involves student participation. It would work well for schools focusing on engaging students and parents in communicating and developing problem-solving skills on issues related to drugs and other potential harms.

ACTIVITY	FACILITATED BY	SUGGESTED TIME
1. Introduction Brief discussion outlining the purpose of the evening	School Community Personnel – Principal/teacher/parent representative	5 min
2. *Icebreaker (1)* Agree or Disagree (Activity 1.3)	Adult[17]-led with students facilitating small group work	10 min
3. *Icebreaker (2)* Harm Ranking Game (Activity 1.5)	Adult-facilitated small group work with student and parent groups comparing notions of harm	15 min
4. *Information sharing* Video Trigger: Interview with Experts with follow-up activity (Activity 2.1) *or* Reality vs Myth – Factually Speaking (Activity 2.2)	Adult-led discussion *or* Adult- or student-facilitated game	15 min
Break – light refreshments		10–15 min
5. *Problem solving and communication skills (1)* The Hot Seat (1): with facilitated audience discussion The Hot Seat (2): with facilitated audience discussion (Activity 3.2)	Performed by students with facilitated discussion by the adult/student	15 min each
6. *Problem solving and communication skills (2)* Video Trigger: 'Did You Get Drunk?' with follow-up activity (Activity 3.1(c))	Adult-led group work and discussion focusing on communication skills	30 min
7. *Help-seeking* Parent Pack and discussion (Activity 4.1)	Adult-led with student support	5 min
8. Conclusion/Evaluation	School Community Personnel – Principal/teacher/parent representative	5 min

[17] "Adult" here refers to the lead adult facilitator of the event. Where appropriate this role might be shared by a number of school staff and parent representatives who have the knowledge and skills to undertake this role.

Sample agenda 4: Years 9–10 with high level student participation

This agenda would be appropriate for an event with a high level of student participation and a strong focus on the emerging challenges and responsibilities that come with the freedoms of adulthood. It would work well with a mix of middle and upper secondary students or targeted to students in Years 9–10 and their families.

ACTIVITY	FACILITATED BY	SUGGESTED TIME
1. Introduction Brief discussion outlining the purpose of the evening	School Community Personnel – Principal/teacher/parent representative	5 min
2. *Icebreaker (1)* Highlights and Challenges of Being a Parent (Activity 1.2)	Students facilitating small group work	15 min
3. *Icebreaker (2)* Hypothetical (Activity 1.7)	Led by students and other adults	25 min
4. *Problem solving and communication skills* Hidden Thoughts and Peer Coaching Discussion (1): with facilitated audience discussion Hidden Thoughts and Peer Coaching Discussion (2): with facilitated audience discussion and skills practice (Activity 3.3)	Performed by students with facilitated discussion by the adult/student	30 min
Break – light refreshments		10–15 min
5. *Information sharing* [18] Drug Quiz – Myth Busters (Activity 2.4)	Led by students and run as a TV quiz with parent contestants	15 min
6. Conclusion/Evaluation	School Community Personnel – Principal/teacher/parent representative	10 min

[18] Although in general it is recommended that programs move from information sharing to skills development, the quiz activity can provide an excellent way to round off an event, especially when it is run with high student participation and there is opportunity to recap the main themes of the event.

Parent event activities

Introduction

In this part you will find the 15 activities you might select from to build your own *Building Conversations* programme. These activities are organised into:

1. Icebreakers (7 activities)
2. Information sharing (4 activities)
3. Problem solving and communication skills (3 activities)
4. Help-seeking (1 activity).

Although we recommend you consider including each type of activity in your programme and sequencing these components in the order above, this will depend upon your goals and context.

Activities, issues and tips

1. Icebreaker activity options

Teacher-focused ←				→ Student-focused
1.1. Vox Pops (Years 5–7;Years 8–10) Note: there are two separate Vox Pops video triggers for this activity, addressing two different stages of growing up.	1.2 Highlights and Challenges of Being a Parent (Years 5–10)	1.3 Agree or Disagree (Years 5–10)	1.4 Challenge Ranking Game (Years 5–7) 1.5 Harm Ranking Game (Years 8–10)	1.6 Transition Panel Activity: 'Bouncing into Secondary School' (Years 5–7) 1.7 Hypothetical (Years 8–10)
Uses a video trigger from *Building Conversations* to initiate discussion. Trigger 1.1(a) (00:59:30:00 to 01:01:17:00). We hear from a range of parents expressing challenges and hopes for their children undertaking transition from primary to secondary school. Trigger 1.1(b) (01:09:56:00 to 01:12:36:00). We hear from a range of parents expressing challenges and hopes for their adolescent children as they mature towards adulthood.	Participants brainstorm, in small groups, the highlights and challenges of parenting, followed by whole group discussion.	Values continuum – parents locate and discuss, in small groups, their attitudes to a number of statements on wellbeing issues and young people.	Values ranking exercise where parents work, in small groups (with or without student representatives), ranking a range of situations and then examining their thinking.	A panel role play in which participants discuss and develop insights into the issue under discussion.

1.1 Vox Pops

This activity utilises a video trigger from the *Building Conversations* video/DVD to initiate discussion at the parent event.

Vox pops are the voices/opinions of 'the people in the street'. In the video segments we hear from a range of parents about the challenges and hopes they have for their children at this stage of their life.

1.1(a) Vox Pops (00:59:30:00 to 01:01:17:00) is for parent events involving parents of students in Years 5–7. We hear from some parents about their thoughts and feelings in relation to their children moving into early adolescence, and some possible strategies for maintaining good relationships.

1.1(b) Vox Pops (01:09:56:00 to 01:12:36:00) is for parent events involving parents of students in Years 8–10. We hear from some parents about their thoughts and feelings in relation to their adolescent children growing up and facing new responsibilities and challenges.

Aims

- To encourage the interaction and sharing of ideas on being a parent.
- To provide permission for parents to express a range of concerns and hopes around the parenting and wellbeing of their children.
- To support thinking about how the challenges and concerns of children growing up may be addressed and the value of effective communication between parents and their children.

Issues to consider

- The vox pops provide a useful starter for an event which focuses on parents' thoughts and feelings. Participants can hear and consider a range of views to use as the basis for a discussion. (This can also be used as a follow-up activity.)
- Discussion for parents of upper primary school children might be around issues of transition from primary to secondary school.
- Parents of secondary school children might focus on their hopes and fears connected to their children growing up.
- Before using this trigger it is important that you view the appropriate Vox Pops segment (see above) to determine that the views expressed are relevant and useful for your own school community.

- It is intended that the vox pops provide a trigger for discussion. If they are used as an icebreaker at the start of the evening, it is important to highlight the concepts you may come back to later in the evening. For example, you might tell the audience they will be exploring the importance of communication in a later activity.
- When facilitating discussion after the Vox Pop has been shown, it is useful to point out that the parents in the video are often commenting about their own children and these views may not apply to others' situations.
- It is useful to remember that the views expressed on the video and among parents might reveal a range of emotions and concerns. It is important to comment at this stage that parenting can be both rewarding and challenging. Those who do have concerns should be encouraged to seek support and assistance.

Tips

- You might choose to follow the Vox Pops segment with a whole group discussion, where parents talk in pairs or small groups.
- The Activity 1.1 worksheet asks two questions that are intended to help parents focus on the main issues and then note some of their ideas.
- If young people are participating in the event, you may choose to arrange parents and adults in small groups and young people in separate small groups. (This will assist parents to speak freely.) Alternatively, groups can be mixed to include parents and students so that there is some discussion of the positives/challenges from both perspectives and possible strategies for positive relationships.
- Depending on the timing and participant numbers, you might choose to share a few responses across the group/s.

Activity 1.1 Vox Pops (Years 5–7; Years 8–10)

Resources

Building Conversations video/DVD

Vox Pops for Years 5–7 (00:59:30:00 to 01:01:17:00)

Vox Pops for Years 8–10 (01:09:56:00 to 01:12:36:00)

Activity 1.1 worksheet (optional)

Description of activity

Briefly introduce the Vox Pops segment explaining that we'll now hear from a few parents on their thoughts and feelings about their own children growing up.

Play the Vox Pops segment.

Discussion questions

Ask parents to discuss, in pairs or small groups (and using the Activity 1.1 worksheet if appropriate):

1. To what extent do you agree or identify with some of the views expressed on the video?
2. What do you see as the particular positives and challenges for you and your children as they grow older?
3. What are some possible strategies for having positive relationships within families where there are adolescent children?

Ask for some feedback from the group/s and then draw out some of the key themes within the groups, relating these back to the focus of the event.

Activity 1.1: Worksheet

1. What are the positives and challenges for you and your children as they grow older?

Positives	Challenges
Parents	Parents
Children	Children

2. What are some possible strategies for positive relationships between you and your children as they move through adolescence?

Suggested strategies

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1.2 Highlights and Challenges of Being a Parent

This activity provides an opportunity for participants to brainstorm, in small groups, the highlights and challenges of parenting. This is followed by whole group discussion. The activity has been designed so that students can be involved, presenting the highlights and challenges about this stage of transition (growing up).

Aims

- To encourage the interaction and sharing of ideas on being a parent.
- To position issues of safety, wellbeing and drugs within a broad social context.
- To support thinking about how challenges may be addressed and the value of effective communication between parents and their children.

Issues to consider

- Students can facilitate aspects of this activity.
- This activity works well in conjunction with the vox pops and experts from the video (see Activities 1.1 and 2.1).
- While this is an icebreaker activity, the issues raised will often relate to later, more in-depth discussion, and can provide a useful way to share information between groups.
- It is recommended that an adult facilitator highlight the themes drawn out from each group, rather than a student facilitator.

Tips

- Divide participants into small groups, preferably four to six people.
- Displaying the responses around the room provides an opportunity for people to look at what other groups have highlighted, and provides the facilitator with some material to gather from the event.

Activity 1.2 Highlights and Challenges of Being a Parent (Years 5–10)

Resources

Activity 1.2: Worksheet – Highlights and Challenges (one for each group)

Description of activity

Form small groups and ask each group to brainstorm a response to the four statements listed on the Activity 1.2 worksheet. Ask each group to record their responses on the worksheet.

Collect the responses from each group and either display them on a board or write them on a white board.

Point out common themes for each response, then briefly discuss broader themes around parents and children communicating with each other and acknowledging their fears and hopes.

Activity 1.2: Worksheet – Highlights and Challenges

The best thing about being the parent of a young person is …
The best thing about being a young person is …
The most difficult thing about being the parent of a young person is …
The most difficult thing about being a young person is …

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1.3 Agree or Disagree

This activity provides an opportunity for parents to participate in values clarification. Small groups are formed, in which people can locate and discuss their attitudes towards a number of statements on wellbeing issues and young people. The activity has been designed so that students may be involved as group facilitators or instructors, as well as taking part in the small group discussions.

The activity can be used to start the parent event as it is also a good way for parents to introduce themselves to each other. It can be conducted separately from other icebreakers but is also a useful activity to follow 1.1 or 1.2, as it draws on specific examples of the themes raised in these activities.

Aims

- To highlight the differences in values and attitudes of those in the group.
- To encourage participants to reflect on their own attitudes and values and those of others.

Issues to consider

- If students are facilitating this activity, it is recommended that they run through the activity a few times before the event to provide them with a range of comments or opinions about particular statements. This will empower them to have a voice and will help them to feel confident when communicating with adults. It will also help ensure they have a clear understanding of the statements.
- It is very important to stress that the statements are designed to be open to interpretation, and so there are no right or wrong answers, only differences in opinion.
- When choosing statements for the activity, make sure they cover a range of issues. Samples are provided in the Activity 1.3 statement cards. Note that there are two sets of sample cards provided: one for an event targeting parents and students in Years 5–7; and the other for an event targeting parents and students in Years 8–10.
- Adults generally respond well to this activity but the facilitator needs to be ready to help any group that can't come to an agreement or respond to issues raised by the group.
- There is potential in this activity for students or adults to make inappropriate statements or claims (for example "It's more risky for a boy to get drunk because boys can't tolerate alcohol" or "All boys are drunks"). Such comments are best addressed by the facilitator. Refer to Part 2, 'Sensitive issues' at p 27 for how to manage inappropriate comments and disclosure in parent event settings.

Tips

- The activity assumes participants are in groups of six people, but can be easily adapted to different size groups. Note, however, that a group of more than six will make it difficult for everyone to contribute to the discussion.
- As facilitator, be prepared for a range of responses and underlying values.

Activity 1.3 Agree or Disagree (Years 5–10)

This activity is based on *Creating Conversations*, Activity 2, pp 31–32.

Resources

- Activity 1.3 Statement Cards or statements you have devised that are suitable to both the school community and stage of the students. Ensure you have enough statements for everyone in each group (ie for all participants in the discussion).
- Signs stating 'agree', 'disagree' and 'undecided' – these can be written on large sheets of paper to which the statements can be attached.

Description of activity

Give each of the small groups the 'agree', 'disagree' and 'undecided' signs, and six statements.

Each person in the group is responsible for one statement and must first place his/her statement on one of the signs. After discussion, the whole group needs to come to a consensus about where each statement should be placed. This does not require all people to have the same opinion but, where possible, a majority rule may apply.

It is the conversation around the statement and not the final decision which is important.

When all participants have placed their statements, choose one statement from each of the groups for feedback or comment on the process.

It is important to highlight the value of shared opinions and of allowing individuals to have different opinions and attitudes.

Note that the Activity 1.3 Statement Cards are sample cards only. It is important to provide statements that are:

- appropriate to the context and focus of the school community and parent event
- relevant to the stage of development of the young people involved.

Activity 1.3: Statement Cards (Years 5–7)

1.	Alcohol and other drug education is the parents' responsibility.
2.	Parents have the greatest influence over young people today.
3.	Young people get most of their information about drugs from friends.
4.	Children learn to develop resilience mostly from their family.
5.	Education has little effect on young people's choice to take up cigarette smoking.
6.	Schools and parents can't do anything to stop bullying occurring at school.
7.	Peer pressure is the main reason why some children of primary school age try cigarettes.
8.	School is much harder for young people today than ever before.
9.	The media and popular culture have more influence over young people than school or families.
10.	Families have the greatest influence over young people today.

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Activity 1.3: Statement Cards (Years 8–10)

1.	Alcohol is worse than drugs such as ecstasy or heroin.
2.	It's more risky for a boy to get drunk than a girl.
3.	Alcohol and other drug education is the parents' responsibility.
4.	Teenagers who have not tried drugs like alcohol or tobacco are unlikely to try cannabis.
5.	Parents have the greatest influence over young people today.
6.	No one factor causes someone to use drugs or develop a drug problem.
7.	Young people get most of their information about drugs from friends, television and other media.
8.	It is harder being a young person today than ever before.
9.	Schools and parents can't do anything to stop bullying occurring at school.
10.	The media and popular culture have more influence over young people than school or families.

(Adapted from *Creating Conversations*, p 32.)

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1.4 Challenge Ranking

This activity provides an opportunity for parents to work in small groups (with the option to include students) to rank a range of situations from least to most challenging, and then examine their thinking.

An extension activity might include a demonstration by students on how they ranked the harms.

This activity is focused around the possible challenges (and excitements) of students moving through the transition from primary to secondary schooling. It provides an opportunity for parents and their children to consider a whole range of issues related to adolescence and change.

Aims

- To enable both parents and young people to explore their personal values and attitudes about transition issues, especially the move from primary to secondary school.
- To promote discussion between adults and young people around change.

Issues to consider

- Students can be involved in this activity in a number of ways. For example, they can act as a facilitator to introduce the activity (see below) and/or work as a group to rank the situations and discuss their views, which can then be compared to those of the parent group/s.
- The situations on the cards provided focus on the theme of transition and invite responses around this issue, including change, relationships and new experiences. It is not necessary to use all the situation cards. You are encouraged to devise others that are relevant to your school community.
- Depending on whether or not students are participating in the activity, you may wish to change the focus of the situations so they are either adult-focused or aimed at young people. You can ask adults to put themselves into the shoes of a young person in this activity.
- This activity may be undertaken in a variety of ways and depends on the size of the participating group. It is described here as a small group activity involving all participants. The groups can be formed in a variety of ways, for example mixed/all adults/all students. In a larger group you may choose to ask a number of volunteers to place themselves on a continuum at the front of the audience.

- This kind of activity is adult-led, with capacity for student involvement as group leaders and in the extension activity where student and adult views are compared.
- This is a useful classroom activity. Students need to have practised it before it is run at the parent event if they are to facilitate the group.
- The value of this activity is in the discussion that takes place along the way, not how the situations have been ranked.

Tip

- Remember, the situations described in this activity apply to both young people and adults. It is important to remember that 'least challenging' can mean something that an individual may be looking forward to. For example, the situation *Having to make new friends* might be something that some young people and parents are looking forward to, but for others it may be quite daunting.

Activity 1.4 Challenge Ranking (Years 5–7)

Resources

Activity 1.4 Situation Cards

Description of activity

The facilitator indicates each end of the continuum. If you choose to use a student presenter, here is a possible introduction:

> *For this activity you need to break into groups of about six to eight people. Each person is responsible for ranking [three] cards. You need to rank your situation in terms of how challenging it is compared to other situations and then place them in order from most challenging to least challenging. Each person has a turn to read out the situation and decide where to put it on the continuum. After all the cards have been placed, the group can alter the order of ranking if justifications for the change are given and agreed to by the group.*

Each person is given two or three of the situation cards and asked to place them along the continuum from 'Least Challenging' to 'Most Challenging'. The facilitator indicates where each end of the continuum is. They need to choose why the situation belongs there and explain this to the group.

When each person has had a turn, changes can be made to the order of ranking if justifications for the change are given.

Comparing groups' responses to the three most challenging and three least challenging situations is a good way to round up the activity. There is an opportunity to discuss within the whole group the key challenges identified across the groups and what might be done to support young people and their families to cope with such challenges.

Discussion questions

The following questions may be useful for the facilitator:

1. What things cause least concern or may be seen as 'exciting' about moving to secondary school? For example, aspects of transition that some young people or parents look forward to may include making a new start, facing new challenges or becoming more independent from parents. (Remember, some might also find these things very challenging.)
2. What things cause the most concern? Ask for an example from each of the groups.
3. How might parents and teachers help reduce the fears around these challenges (for example communication, planning strategies, being pro-active)?
4. What are some ways in which parents might help young people cope with challenges? How might schools help?
5. (If parents and young people have undertaken the activity together.) Do young people and parents rate the most challenging things at the same level? Why might this be?
6. How might parents help their children and their children's friends cope with transition to secondary school?

Activity 1.4: Situation Cards

1.	Finding your way around the school
2.	Learning new subjects
3.	Going to a school that has many more students
4.	Getting to know the older students
5.	Having less free time
6.	Having a canteen to buy lunch or snacks
7.	A potential increase in academic pressures and competition compared to primary school
8.	An increase in peer pressure in relation to drug or alcohol use
9.	Leaving primary school behind
10.	Getting lots of homework
11.	Having to get up earlier and home later
12.	Learning to read a timetable
13.	Catching public transport

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Activity 1.4: Situation Cards, cont.

14. Being the youngest in the school again
15. Having to make new friends
16. Having many different teachers
17. Going to a different school from your friends
18. Having to deal with so many different textbooks
19. Coping with a locker/key
20. Children wanting more independence and an increase in social life
21. Parents being less familiar or less involved in the secondary school
22. Parents being less familiar with the subjects and homework young people receive
23. Mobile phones
24. Having a detention system
25. Joining new sporting teams
26. Children reaching an age where drug and alcohol issues become more prevalent

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1.5 Harm Ranking Game

This activity provides an opportunity for parents to work in small groups (with the option to include students) to rank a range of situations that involve drug use of some kind from least to most harmful, and then examine their thinking.

Aim

- To enable participants to explore their personal values and attitudes with respect to drug use and to become aware of others' values and attitudes, especially across generations.

Issues to consider

- Students can be involved in this activity in a number of ways. For example, they can act as a facilitator to introduce the activity (see below) and/or work as a group to rank the situations and discuss their views which can then be compared to those of the parent group/s.
- The situations described on the Activity 1.5 situation cards focus on a range of issues and possible harms. It is not necessary to use all the situation cards provided. You are encouraged to devise others that are relevant to your school community.
- Depending on whether or not students are participating in the activity, you may wish to change the focus of the situations so they are either adult-focused or aimed at young people. You can ask adults to put themselves into the shoes of a young person in this activity.
- This activity may be undertaken in a variety of ways and depends on the size of the participating group. It is described here as a small group activity involving all participants. The groups can be formed in a variety of ways, for example mixed/all adults/all students. In a larger group you may choose to ask a number of volunteers to place themselves on a continuum at the front of the audience.
- This kind of activity is adult-led, with capacity for student involvement as group leaders and in the extension activity where student and adult views are compared.
- This is a useful classroom activity. Students need to have practised it before it is run at the parent event, especially if they are to facilitate the group.
- The value of this activity is in the discussion that takes place along the way, not how the situations have been ranked.

Tips

- Note that the situation cards used in this activity are focused on a range of drug-related behaviours and require understanding of how to facilitate discussion between adults and young people on potentially confronting issues.
- Given that the focus of the activity is on discussing potentially confronting drug-related issues, it is important that the overall discussion and debriefing of the activity is conducted by an adult facilitator and not a student. It is suggested that secondary students might participate as coordinators, presenting the activity and supporting the group work, or as part of a group.
- If students help facilitate the groups they need to be familiar with each scenario. They need to understand the definitions and that their role is not to be an expert on drug information; their expertise is on how to run the activity. This is a valuable classroom activity, and if students are to act as facilitators of this activity at a parent event, they need to have practised it in advance.
- It is important to suggest to student facilitators that they can always refer to an adult in the room for assistance.
- Familiarity with the process of protective interrupting is important. Refer to Part 2, 'Sensitive issues' at p 27 for how to manage inappropriate comments and disclosure in parent event settings.

Activity 1.5 Harm Ranking Game (Years 8–10)

This activity is based on *Creating Conversations,* Activity 10, pp 115–117.)

Resources

Activity 1.5 Situation Cards

Description of activity

The facilitator indicates each end of the continuum. If you choose to use a student presenter, here is a possible introduction:

For this activity you need to break into groups of about six to eight people. Each person is responsible for ranking [three] cards. You need to rank your situation in terms of how dangerous or risky it is compared to other situations and then place them in order from least harmful to most harmful. Each person has a turn to read out the situation and decide where to put it on the continuum. After all the cards have been placed, the group can alter the order of ranking if justifications for the change are given and agreed on by the group.

Each person is given two or three of the situation cards and asked to place them along the continuum from 'Least Dangerous/Risky to Most Dangerous/ Risky'. The facilitator indicates where each end of the continuum is. They need to choose why the situation belongs there and explain this to the group. (It is not necessary to use all of the situations, as some may not be relevant. They can be removed or added to, to suit the school community).

When each person has had a turn, changes can be made to the order of ranking if justifications for the change are given.

Remember, the value of this activity is in the discussion that takes place along the way, not how the situations have been ranked.

Comparing the three situations considered the most dangerous and three considered the least dangerous is a good way to round up the activity.

Activity 1.5: Situation Cards

1.	Accepting a lift with a person who is stoned
2.	Eating some hash biscuits at a friend's house
3.	Getting stoned every day
4.	Giving a hash biscuit to someone without telling them what's in it
5.	Growing five cannabis plants in your backyard
6.	Letting your 12-year-old brother try speed
7.	Using 'No-Doz' to help stay awake while driving a truck long distances
8.	Smoking a cigarette to calm your nerves
9.	Smoking a joint at a party
10.	Smoking a joint before going to work
11.	Smoking marijuana at school
12.	Smoking marijuana, then driving a car
13.	Supplying speed to all your friends at a party

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Activity 1.5: Situation Cards, cont.

14. Taking three valium tablets with a glass of wine
15. Taking a sleeping tablet every night for a week
16. Taking an ecstasy tablet at a nightclub
17. Taking an LSD tablet at home by yourself
18. Taking an unknown tablet from a friend who convinces you to try it
19. Taking your grandmother's medication from her cabinet
20. Having a party on the beach or riverbank late at night
21. Using anabolic steroids to enhance your muscle development
22. Staying out all night when your parents think you are staying at a friend's place
23. Using 'No-Doz' to help you stay awake when studying
24. Drinking and then driving your car a very short distance home because you can't get a taxi
25. Using fake ID to get into a nightclub

(Adapted from *Creating Conversations*, pp 116–117.)

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1.6 Transition Panel Activity: 'Bouncing into Secondary School'

This activity provides an opportunity for participants to hear from and then ask questions of a panel of speakers, including student, parent and staff representatives, on the challenges and excitements of moving to high school. It provides the opportunity to explore broader issues of change with early adolescents moving into new environments and experiences.

Aims

- To explore expectations and concerns about moving into a new school environment.
- To provide an opportunity for parents to examine the issues for young people and schools regarding transition and change.

Issues to consider

- In this activity the students act as both hosts of the 'programme' and interviewers. Their role is to introduce the panel guests and conduct the interviews. While the bulk of the information is provided by the panel guests, the students' role is to ask the questions.
- This activity requires rehearsal for the student interviewers and is best practised as a classroom activity. Students will feel more confident about facilitating the panel if they have run through it a few times. Asking other students to play the role of the interviewees is a good way for the class to explore the issues about transition for both parents and young people.
- This activity offers opportunities for individual parents to ask questions in relation to transition issues that may be common to many, and for schools to provide information specific to their school community.
- This activity provides the opportunity for schools to link with their broader community, including secondary schools in the region. This increases the need for greater collaboration and preparation with school welfare personnel, parents and teacher networks.
- A school counsellor from a secondary school is well placed to address a variety of help-seeking strategies for both parents and young people, and reduce the stigma attached to needing assistance with this process. If a school counsellor is not available, often a teacher will be able to cover the issues. For many parents this may be the first opportunity to hear first-hand what the role of a school counsellor is and how a parent might make use of this.
- The questions provided as a guide for the panel interviewers can be adapted to suit the needs of your school community.

- Before the event and in preparation for running this activity, it is a good idea to conduct a brainstorm activity to investigate the issues parents might raise in relation to young people becoming more independent. This may include issues beyond school and will provide more material for the panel interviewers.
- It helps to model the activity on a television show that sets up panel interviewers and guests. Some ways to achieve this include having a TV table with chairs for the interviewers and guests; decorating the table with a coloured cloth, and setting it with a jug of water and cups – all these help to establish the scene as a television-type performance. Playing music before and after, as well as having a student act as the 'host' by opening the show will also help (and the opportunity exists here for other students who may wish to perform either a short song or recital as part of the programme).

Tips

- Each interviewer can take on a question for each of the panel guests or, alternatively, be responsible for one guest each.
- Providing suggested written questions on a card will help to make the students feel more confident and allows the interviewer to ask further questions where appropriate.
- One or two students may also participate as panel guests representing young people. In this instance, they may need to be students who are more familiar with public speaking or are confident in talking in front of an audience. For these students, it is a good idea to provide a copy of the questions beforehand so they can prepare some answers and better understand their role.

Activity 1.6 Transition Panel Activity: 'Bouncing into Secondary School' (Years 5–7)

Resources

- Set up a panel table with the appropriate number of chairs for panel members and the three interviewers (seated in the middle).

Activity 1.6 Sample Interview Questions (optional)

Description of activity

This activity requires three students to interview some 'experts' in relation to the transition from primary to secondary school. The panel works well with three students who act as the interviewers using a set of questions to guide them.

The panelists can consist of the following (or others if required):

- a final year primary student
- a first year secondary student
- a school teacher or principal
- a school counsellor
- a parent (or parents).

The student interviewers are responsible for introducing the activity and welcoming the audience. To assist with the flow of the activity, an introductory statement could be prepared and presented by a student.

First, bring out the students and interview them using appropriate questions. The following Activity 1.6 Sample Interview Questions provide a guide.

When the students have been interviewed, thank them and invite them to stay on the panel for questions at the end. Now invite the school counsellor and teacher/principal to the panel. (See Activity 1.6 Sample Interview Questions for a guide.)

When the teacher and school counsellor have been interviewed, repeat the step above and invite the parent/s to take a seat on the panel.

When all the interviews are complete, thank the panel guests for sharing their opinions and then invite the audience to ask any other questions of them. The student interviewers are responsible for encouraging the audience to ask questions from the floor and directing them to the appropriate guest.

Activity 1.6: Sample Interview Questions

Sample interview questions to the Year 6 student

1. What kind of things are you looking forward to about starting secondary school?
2. What are going to be the major differences for you?
3. What are the things that worry you or your friends about secondary school?
4. What will you miss about primary school?
5. What sort of things do you think will help make it easier for you?

Sample interview questions to the Year 7 student

1. Tell us what it was like for you going to secondary school.
2. What did you miss about your primary school?
3. What kind of things helped you, and what made it harder?
4. What advice have you got to offer Year 6 students about moving to Year 7?

Sample interview questions to the teacher/principal and school counsellor

1. Young people have been moving from primary to secondary school for years. You probably didn't get any special help so why the big deal?
2. What advice have you got to offer to young people who are moving from primary to secondary school?
3. What advice would you give to a young person who is really finding the move too overwhelming and after many weeks still doesn't feel comfortable?
4. What can schools do to help make the transition go smoothly?
5. What about parents – what should parents do if they know their child is not fitting into their new school?

Sample interview questions to the parent representative/s

1. Tell us your thoughts about children moving from primary to secondary school. What are you looking forward to?
2. What are some of the things that concern you and other parents you know?
3. As a parent, how do you think dealing with a secondary school will be different from primary school?
4. How do you think parents can help their children to 'bounce into secondary school'?

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1.7 Hypothetical

This activity provides an opportunity for participants to discuss and develop insights into the issue of smoking in public places. If you and your school wish to focus on a different type of issue, you may develop your own statement and characters.

Aims

- To demonstrate and promote student-based participation in the parent event.
- To initiate parent participation and discussion in student-led activities.
- To provide an opportunity to involve students and parents in an exploration of a drug-related issue (in a non-threatening way) which is relevant to the school community.

Issues to consider

- If you and your school wish to focus on a different issue, the sample sheets in Activity 1.7 provide a model for developing your own statement and characters.
- This activity requires rehearsal for the student facilitator and panellists and is best practised as a classroom activity. Students will feel more confident if they have run through it a few times.
- Before the event and in preparation for running this activity, it is a good idea to conduct a brainstorm activity to investigate the issues parents might raise in relation to smoking and other drug use.
- This activity provides the opportunity for collaboration and preparation with school welfare personnel, parents and teacher networks.
- The questions and responses in Activity 1.7 are provided as a guide for the panel interviewers and can be adapted to suit the needs of your school community.
- It helps to model the activity on a television show that uses a 'hypotheticals' approach.

Tips

- It is important to remember that the hypothetical requires time spent on rehearsal and preparation. It will be more effective when students have had a few rehearsals. It is a good activity to demonstrate at a staff meeting, as this will help students prepare and experience audience participation before the actual parent event.

- Providing questions and suggested answers can decrease the need for rehearsal and allow adults to take a character role on the panel. (See Activity 1.7 Sample Panel Sheets for a guide.)
- This hypothetical has a large element of humour. A motivating fact for students is that it provides roles as humorous characters for those who enjoy participating. Often young people who are reluctant to take part in an event will participate in an activity such as this, and in some cases they will encourage their parents to attend.
- It is advisable to have an adult play the role of the adolescent, as this adds to the humour and allows the stereotyped view of young people to be highlighted in a safe environment.
- The hypothetical itself does not intend to address the issue of parenting but it does provide a platform for student participation.
- A necessary point to get across is that both the panellists and audience are playing a role, so it is important for the students to stay in character and for the audience to ask questions which challenge the character's ideas.
- Depending on your audience, you can either hand out some of the questions provided to start the process off, or you can give out names of the characters to small groups of people and ask them to come up with their own questions (this also encourages communication within the audience).
- Encourage students on the panel to help each other out with difficult questions. Providing some prepared responses is one way to make this easier.
- Wearing at least one prop is always useful as it helps the person to stay in character.

Activity 1.7 Hypothetical (Years 8–10)

This activity is from *Creating Conversations*, Activity 3, pp 33–64.[19]

Description of activity

This activity consists of a series of panellists performing a role play.

A student presenter/facilitator introduces the hypothetical, for example:

> *This activity is called a hypothetical and it involves a number of characters on a panel giving their opinion about smoking. When the panellists have given their opinions, you, the audience, will be invited to ask questions of them which are meant to challenge the ideas of the characters. The hypothetical is:*
>
> To celebrate the New Year, a huge event has been organised at the [*name a venue*]. It will consist of some sort of sporting event and half-time entertainment – models on a catwalk modelling the latest fashions. It is an open-air event but the controversy is whether the organisers should allow smoking. To help them decide, they wish to hear from members of the public.

The student facilitator introduces each member of the panel. Each is invited to introduce him/herself briefly and to give an opinion about smoking. Panel members present their scripted opinions in role.

The student facilitator facilitates the audience question session by:

- inviting members of the audience to ask questions of the panel members
- reminding the audience that they are also playing a role and are meant to ask questions that challenge the character's opinion
- prompting the audience, if necessary, or handing out question cards.

At the end of the activity the facilitator might choose to step out of character and open up the discussion on, for example:

- cigarette smoking, young people and advertising
- what parents and schools can effectively do to discourage the uptake of smoking
- the reduction of smoking in the community and factors which may have contributed to this.

[19] State of Victoria (2002) *Creating Conversations Training Manual*, Student Wellbeing Branch, Department of Education and Training, Melbourne, Vic.

Activity 1.7: Sample Panel Sheets

(Adapted from *Creating Conversations*, pp 33–64.)

Sample facilitator and panellists
HOST: Mr/Ms M.C. Robertson
1. Tobacco Company Executive (Mr Nick O'Teen) 2. Fitness Instructor (Ms Verity Fit or Mr Barry Fit) 3. Non-smoker (Mildred aged 55) 4. Doctor (Dr Penny Cillin/Dr Steth. A. Scope) 5. Adolescent smoker (Winnie Blue/Benny Hedges aged 15) 6. Smoker (Bob aged 85) 7. Financial Adviser (Ms/Mr Lotta Cash) 8. Model Agent (Tamara) 9. QUIT Worker (Will Power)

Sample panellist opinions	
Tobacco Company Executive (Mr Nick O'Teen)	I believe that there is no conclusive proof that smoking affects health. It's legal and, what's more, I provide employment for thousands of people who would otherwise be hungry. I don't force people to smoke, it's their choice.
Fitness Instructor (Ms Berry Fit/Mr Barry Fit)	I believe people who don't smoke are fitter than those who do because smoking reduces lung capacity. If you want to reach the top in your sport – don't smoke!
Non-smoker (Mildred aged 55)	I suffer from asthma and it's smoking that causes it. I think smoking should be made an illegal activity, because passive smoking makes me wheeze. Smokers are such selfish people!
Doctor (Dr Penny Cillin/ Dr Steth. A. Scope)	I believe, in fact I know, smoking is the main cause of drug-related deaths. Smoking causes lung cancer and passive smoking also results in illness. Smoking doesn't just kill, it results in poor quality of health for many people. Smoking should be banned.
Adolescent Smoker (Winnie Blue/Benny Hedges aged 15)	Look, I smoke, okay, and it's my choice. I like it; it's fun and all my friends smoke, too. It's a good excuse to just hang out together and I can give up whenever I want; I'm not addicted.
Smoker (Bob aged 85)	I've smoked a pack of ciggies every day since I was 12 and I've never had a sick day in my life. I'm living proof that smoking is okay and what people go on about is bunkum! Smoking calms my nerves, you know, helps me to relax.
Financial Adviser (Ms/Mr Lotta Cash)	I believe that cigarette smoking is expensive and a waste of money. Two packets a week is $18 or $936 a year. For someone like Bob, that's $234,000 in his lifetime, which would be a very comfortable unit in a retirement home. [Note that figures have been updated to reflect current prices.]
Model Agent (Tamara)	I don't mind if my young models smoke because it stops them from overeating and I like my models to be rather on the thin side. (Don't we all?) I don't let them smoke on the catwalk, of course, but behind the scenes is fine. It helps to settle their nerves.
QUIT Worker (Will Power)	Well, I think smoking is a disgusting habit. It's unhealthy and it costs the community huge amounts of money. Smoking should be banned. It's my job to help people give up.

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Activity 1.7: Sample Panel Sheets, cont.

Sample questions and answers*
These questions can be used to help students prepare for the event, or they can be distributed to the audience at the event as a prompt to support interaction with the panel. * Note that the sample answers have been added specifically for *Building Conversations*; they did not appear in *Creating Conversations*.
Question to: Tobacco Company Executive Do you sleep well at night knowing many people are sick as a result of your product?
Sample answer: *Yes I sleep very well. People get sick from the 21st century, not my product. I told you, I provide food on the table for thousands of people. I'm actually a really good bloke. I don't force people to smoke.*
Question to: Tobacco Company Executive Well, Mr O'Teen, you claim there is no conclusive proof that smoking causes lung cancer, so what are those little warning stickers, like smoking kills, you put on the packets?
Sample answer: *Well, the government makes me do that, but people are smart – they just ignore them after a while. It doesn't affect my sales, I am happy to do as I'm told.*
Question to: Doctor Are the effects of passive smoking really that bad, or is Mildred just a complainer?
Sample answer: *No, Mildred is not a complainer, she has asthma and it is well known that cigarette smoke can make it much harder to breathe. Smoking is a killer and not just for smokers. I should know, I'm a doctor.*
Question to: Doctor Now, how do you explain Bob, after all, he is 85 and still seems pretty healthy?
Sample answer: *Well Bob sounds like he has great trouble breathing and I'd hate to think what his lungs would be like. I think Bob needs to make an appointment with me but he won't come because I refuse to allow smoking in my waiting room. He's a cranky old thing!!*
Question to: Adolescent Do you worry about your health, or getting lung cancer?
Sample answer: *Nah, I won't get lung cancer. I'm too young for that and I can give up before I do – I'm not addicted. Other people get cancer, not me.*
Question to: Adolescent What makes you think you can give up whenever you like, when nicotine is reported to be even more addictive than heroin?
Sample answer: *Because I can do whatever I want, and when I want to give up I can, but I don't happen to want to so I wish you would all stop carrying on about it.*
Question to: Adolescent or QUIT Worker The rate of teenage smoking appears to be going up, especially for girls. Why do you think they seem to be ignoring the warnings?
Sample answer: *They see glamorous people in the movies smoking and so it seems 'cool'. Also, maybe they believe, incorrectly, that smoking will keep them slim.*
Question to: Adolescent What made you take up smoking in the first place? Was it peer pressure?
Sample answer: *Nah, I just did it because my friends did.*

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Activity 1.7: Sample Panel Sheets, cont.

Question to: Fitness Instructor What about Olympic athletes who are smokers and they win medals? How do you explain that?
Sample answer: *I could name many more top sportspeople who don't smoke and remain in the top of their sport for a lot longer than smokers.*
Question to: Financial Advisor Don't you think if people weren't allowed to smoke at the event they would stay home and then ticket sales would be down?
Sample answer: *No, not at all. I think more people would want to go, just ask Mildred. Lots of people don't want smoke blown all over them.*
Question to: Financial Advisor Now, you seem to be very focused on money. What advice would you give to the adolescent who is starting out on a very expensive habit?
Sample answer: *Well, money does make you happy, so I think the adolescent should quit now and start putting his money in the bank. He could buy a car when he's 18.*
Question to: Mildred (non-smoker) Petrol fumes must also make you wheeze. Do you want cars banned as well? Do you consider that smokers should have rights, too?
Sample answer: *No, smokers have no rights, they are so selfish. Cars are a necessity and smoking is not, so ban smoking not cars.*
Question to: Mildred (non-smoker) Mildred, would you be able to go to the game if they allowed smoking?
Sample answer: *No, I would have to stay home because if I went I would probably get very bad asthma. Smoking is bad for my health and I don't even smoke so it should be banned.*
Question to: Bob (smoker) What would you say to your grandson if he wanted to start smoking at 12?
Sample answer: *Well look, when I was 12 they actually thought smoking was good for you, they didn't know what they know now, so I guess it would be better if he didn't – but if he chooses to then he's welcome to come to my caravan for a smoke. Maybe I'm just really lucky so he might be too.*
Question to: Bob (smoker) You sound like you have a bit of trouble breathing; do you think it's related to smoking?
Sample answer: *No, it's just a bit of a cold. It is winter you know, and everybody gets a common cold then. Like I said, I'm fit as a fiddle (cough). I get regular exercise walking my dog Smokey down to the shop each day to get my pack of ciggies. No problem.*
Question to: Model Agent What about those ads on TV that show wrinkles around the mouth and yellow teeth from smoking – surely that's not a good look for a model?
Sample answer: *No, well, that's where good cosmetics like anti-wrinkle cream come in.*
Question to: Model Agent Do you consider your model's health? What about proper nutrition for energy?
Sample answer: *Yes, of course I do, I make sure they get proper nutrition. A carrot and a lettuce leaf is all they need. I can't have them gaining too much weight, can 1? They would get high cholesterol otherwise.*
Question to: Adolescent or QUIT Worker Now, Mr Power, your job is to help people give up. What advice would you have for both Bob and the adolescent? Is it too late for Bob to think about giving up?
Sample answer: *No, it's never too late to give up and if Bob gave up he might live to 100. I can help both him and the adolescent give up now.*

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2. Information sharing activity options

Teacher-focused				Student-focused
2.1 Video Trigger – Interview with Experts (Years 5–10)		2.2 Reality vs Myth – Factually Speaking (Years 5–10)		2.3 Quiz (Years 5–7) 2.4 Drug Quiz – Myth Busters (Years 8–10)
Uses a video trigger from *Building Conversations* video/DVD with two experts presenting key information on drug prevalence and ways parents can productively communicate with their children.		A game where participants mingle to form pairs and consider facts on the prevalence of drug use among young people.		Questions in the quiz can focus on parenting, drug or transition issues, depending on the school community and the age and stage of the students. The quiz can be run in a number of formats, including a trivia quiz or a TV show.

3

2.1 Video Trigger – Interview with Experts

This activity utilises a video trigger from the *Building Conversations* video/DVD to present evidence-based information on drug prevalence and ways of communicating with young people on drug-related issues.

The video trigger (01:01:17:00 to 01:01:06:00; 01:12:36:00 to 01:17:24:00) provides useful information from two experts that can be used as the basis for facilitated group discussion among parents.

Aims

- To highlight some myths and facts about drug use.
- To provide credible evidence-based information on factors impacting on problematic drug use (including the concepts of risk and protective factors).
- To provide useful advice on parental strategies for drug prevention and reducing harm.

Issues to consider

- The facilitator must be skilled in facilitating inclusive and non-judgmental discussion.
- When conducting a whole group discussion, the facilitator may need to use protective interrupting techniques and should be prepared for this. (See also Part 2, 'Sensitive issues' at p 27.)
- The role of the facilitator is to raise questions for thought and examination.
- The facilitator needs to be prepared to respond to questions and concerns in relation to situations which may need to be referred to other agencies or programs.
- It is **not** the facilitator's role to:
  – provide advice on parenting decisions
  – provide counselling for parents
  – make comments on individual incidents.
- Current statistics on drug use and young people may be made available for this activity, although it is important to remember that statistics need to be used in context.

Tips

- Avoid getting into a discussion about drug use being 'right' or 'wrong'. The relationship between drugs and society is complex and requires a thoughtful and considered approach. It may be valuable to raise this issue before you start the discussion.

- It is important to highlight that while some drugs are more powerful than others, there is no clear distinction between safe and unsafe drugs and that all drug use is potentially dangerous.
- Raise the point that just because a young person uses drugs it doesn't mean they are addicted or even dependent. Most young people's drug use is experimental. However, it is important to make the point that there is still potential for harm to occur. Importantly, open communication with parents can prevent or minimise harm.
- Acknowledge that drugs are a part of young people's lives but that this does not necessarily mean they will ever use or try them.
- If young people are present for this activity, you will need to modify the questions to be inclusive of their opinions. Activity 2.1 has been developed so that participants can work in groups and discuss some of the key issues arising from the video segment around three central issues or topics:
  – Drug prevalence and harm
  – Parental messages, alcohol and reducing drug-related harm
  – Parental skills and protecting young people from drug-related harm.

  Depending on your school context and available time, it may be appropriate to provide different questions or to focus on one key issue.
- After participants have worked in groups using focus questions such as those provided, it will be important to take some time to debrief the groups' responses and consider the implications of these. It can be useful to divide the group work and debriefing into smaller activity segments so that small groups discuss an issue and then report back to the whole group before moving onto another issue and debrief. (This can also help maintain the focus and motivation of the group.)
- As a follow-up to the discussion in this activity, reassure the audience about the important role parents play. One of the aims of an event should be to reduce parents' anxiety and provide the evidence that empowers them.

Activity 2.1 Video Trigger – Interview with Experts (Years 5–10)

Resources

Building Conversations video/DVD (01:01:17:00 to 01:01:06:00; 01:12:36:00 to 01:17:24:00)

Activity 2.1: Focus Questions and Worksheet

OHT 2.1: Diagram

Description of activity

Briefly introduce the segment, explaining that we'll now hear from two leading Australian experts on drug use, young people and some of the key strategies parents can use to help protect their children from harm.

Following is some background information on the two experts that you might draw on to introduce the segment.

> Dr Toumbourou is a leading researcher in adolescent health and an Associate Professor at the University of Melbourne. He has undertaken a number of studies looking at what contributes to the healthy development of young people and factors that can contribute to problematic drug use. (See the following website if you would like any further details: http://www.psych.unimelb.edu.au/cnss/invest/toumbourou.html)
>
> Dr Leanne Rowe is a general practitioner with a special interest in adolescent health and parenting. She also lectures at the University of Melbourne and Monash University, and in 1997 was awarded the Australian Medical Association's 'Best Individual Contribution to Health Care in Australia' for her work in setting up Clockwork Young People's Health Service in Geelong.

Play the video/DVD segment.

In small groups or pairs, allow participants to discuss and record some of their understandings and ideas on the issues raised in the segment. Distribute Activity 2.1(a) Focus questions (or your own questions) to groups to support the discussion before debriefing responses.

Following are some suggested themes and questions that could be used for this discussion.

Drug prevalence and harm

- From the video, what do you understand to be the drugs that can cause most harm to young people?
- Alcohol, tobacco and analgesics are the drugs which have the highest prevalence of use among young people. What sorts of concerns do parents have in regard to legal drugs? What sorts of concerns do parents have in regard to illegal drugs?

If you are engaging in a whole-group discussion or a debrief following small group discussion on the issue of drug prevalence and harm, use OHT 2.1 to illustrate that drug use is not just about the drug but also about the person and their physical environment. Provide an example of how the same person in a different context might react differently to, for example alcohol.

Please note that if you discuss legal and illegal drugs at the parent event you need a knowledgeable and skilled drug education facilitator who can explain the differences and has a strong understanding of prevalence and harms associated with different types of drugs that might be used by young people. It is critical that drug-related information is accurate and relevant for the stage and context of schooling.

A sample script that can be used for explaining the OHT 2.1 diagram is:

> *Drugs can affect people in very different ways. The way a person feels after using a drug will vary according to factors relating to:*
>
> - *the drug*
> - *the characteristics of the user*
> - *the environment or setting in which the drug is used.*
>
> *Two people may use the same amount of the same drug yet experience very different reactions.*
>
> (Source: *Get Wise*, Section 1: Introduction, p 13.)

Parental messages, alcohol and reducing drug-related harm

The focus of these questions is alcohol and the need for parents to adjust their messages to a child's stage of development and likely exposure to risk. The advice from the experts seen on the video is around delaying the onset of use for young people, and reducing frequency of use where an adolescent is drinking regularly.

- What does Dr Toumbourou advise about messages parents should give their children about drinking? (What message does he suggest is important for parents to give to their children at a young/pre-adolescent age? What message does he suggest is important for parents to give to their children at a later stage of development, for example in their mid-teens?)
- What challenges might a parent face in having discussions around drinking with their pre-adolescent child? What challenges might a parent face in having discussions with their children around drinking when their child is already in his/her mid-teens ? What strategies might be useful to deal with these types of challenges?

Parental skills and protecting young people from drug-related harm

Depending on the school context, it may be appropriate to focus on other types of drugs and their use, as well as important messages parents can use to help prevent and minimise drug-related harm.

Dr Rowe says it is important for parents to provide their children with clear boundaries, a warm relationship and to model positive behaviours. Based on the advice provided by the experts in the video segment:

- What do you think are the key skills parents need to protect their children from drug-related harm?
- Do the skills required of a parent change as young people move through adolescence?
- Which parental skills can be the most challenging?
- What can we do as parents to further develop these skills?

Ask the audience to complete and discuss Activity 2.1(b) Parenting skills.

The focus of the questions here is on parental skills and providing participants with an opportunity to think about and discuss what, in this context, are important skills. Depending on the structure of your parent event and other selected activities, you might like to undertake this exercise as a 'Problem Solving and Communication Skills' activity.

Extension questions:

Depending on time, focus and appropriateness, you could ask participants to also consider the following questions:

1. How could you raise the topic of experimental drug use with your child?
2. How much freedom should parents allow their children at this stage of life – for example, what things do you allow and at what age?
3. How do you encourage young people to be more independent but without getting into difficulties?

3

4. How would you respond to your child if you learned that he/she had used an illegal drug?

5. Advice given by the 'experts' is that it is okay, in fact it is **advisable**, to seek help with the parenting of adolescents. What are the barriers to seeking help? How might these barriers be overcome?

6. Dr Rowe claims young people are far more influenced by their parents, and look for parental acceptance and approval, even if they don't show it. Discuss this statement with the group and make a note of the comments.

Activity 2.1 (a): Focus Questions

1. From the video, what do you understand to be the drugs that cause the most harm to young people?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What kinds of concerns do parents have in regard to legal and illegal drugs?

Legal drugs	Concerns
Illegal drugs	**Concerns**

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Activity 2.1 (a): Focus Questions, cont.

3. From the video, what do you understand to be the important messages parents should give their children about alcohol and drinking? (What message does Dr Toumbourou suggest is important for parents to give to their children at a young/ pre-adolescent age? What message does he suggest is important for parents to give to their children at a later stage of development, for example in their mid-teens?)

4. What might be some challenges parents face in having discussions with their children around alcohol and drinking? What might be some strategies for addressing these challenges?

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Activity 2.1 (b): Parenting Skills

1. What do you think are the key skills parents need to protect their children from drug-related harm? Tick what you see as the appropriate box for each statement and then discuss these in your group.

I need to:	Essential	Non-essential	Desirable but not essential
Be able to express my anger to children in a constructive way			
Be able to listen			
Be able to give advice			
Be available to my children whenever they need me			
Be able to show I am the boss in the home			
Be a good organiser			
Always be a good role model to my children			
Cuddle my children			
Be able to say no when I don't want them to do something			
Be able to be a friend to my children			
Be able to support, understand and encourage my children			
Be able to communicate with my children in a non-judgmental way			
Other skills?			

2. Which skills can be the most challenging?
3. What can we do as parents to further develop these skills?

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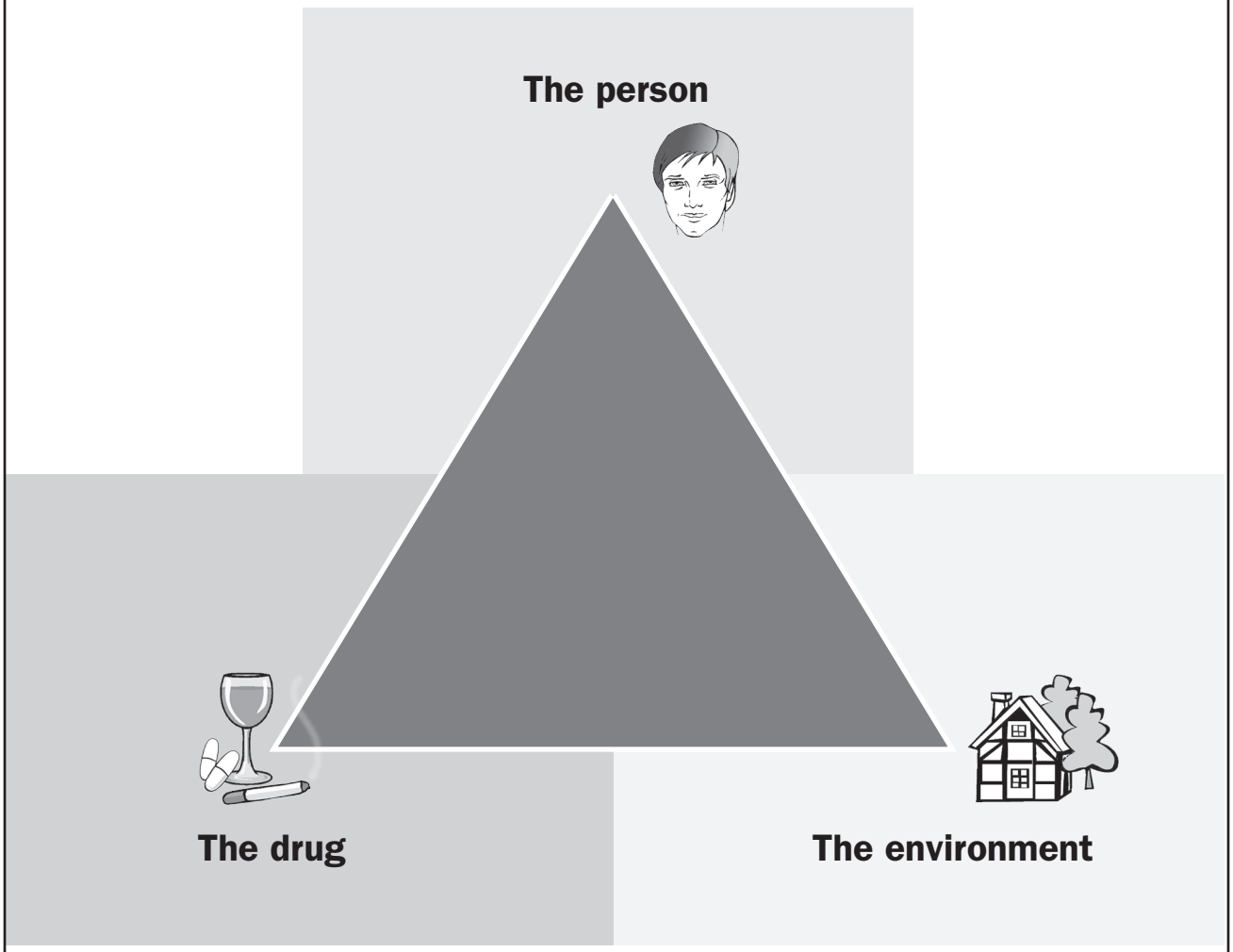
OHT 2.1: Factors that affect the drug experience



(Source: *Get Wise*, Section 1: Introduction, p 13.)

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2.2 Reality vs Myth – Factually Speaking

This activity is facilitated as a game where participants mingle and work in pairs to answer questions related to prevalence of drug use in young people. It can be used as a follow-up to Activity 2.1 and provides a useful method for participants to confront their own understandings and discuss these with others at the event.

Activity 2.2 (a) Statements and Responses are for an upper primary/lower secondary context (Years 5–7) and Activity 2.2 (b) Statements are for a lower/middle secondary context (Years 8–10).

Aims

- To help identify that harmful drug use is not the norm in young people of secondary school age.
- To highlight that the use of tobacco and alcohol is often overestimated by young people.

Issues to consider

Upper primary school context

- It is not feasible to provide drug prevalence data for primary-aged students.
- The majority of primary-aged children do not misuse drugs.
- There is evidence to suggest that the earlier the uptake of substance use, the more likely it is to lead to problematic use.

Upper primary and secondary school context

- The drug prevalence data for this activity is about secondary-aged students.
- The facilitator needs to keep in mind that parents will have different attitudes and perceptions of different drugs, and in some cases the information they have may be factually incorrect and will need to be clarified sensitively.
- Most experimenters and social or recreational users of alcohol and cannabis do not go on to become problematic or dependent users. However, serious harm can still occur from single incidents of drug use.
- Young people who develop problematic drug use are often using the drugs as a coping strategy to help deal with other problems, such as depression.
- Most teenagers do not need treatment for their drug use.
- All young people can benefit from conversations about staying safe and preventing or reducing harm.

- While statistics are useful to provide normative information regarding drug use in young people, it is important to remember that statistics can increase anxiety and fears in some parents.

Tip

- The activity itself can be facilitated by a student. However, the discussion that follows – on prevalence and the implications for parental attitudes and behaviours – is best facilitated by an adult.

Activity 2.2 Reality vs Myth – Factually Speaking (Years 5–10)

The statistics in Activity 2.2, Statements and Responses have been sourced as follows:

1. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2005) *Statistics on drug use in Australia 2004,* AIHW Cat. No. PHE 62, Canberra: AIHW (Drug Statistics Series No. 15) available at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10143>

2. White, V. and Hayman, J. (2004) *Smoking behaviours of Australian secondary students in 2002,* National Drug Strategy Monograph Series No. 54. Canberra, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, available at <http://www.nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/pdf/mono54.pdf>

3. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2005) *2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: Detailed Findings,* AIHW Cat. No. PHE 66, Canberra: AIHW (Drug Statistics Series No.16), available at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/phe/ndshsdf04/ndshsdf04.pdf>

4. White, V. and Hayman, J. (2004) *Australian secondary students' use of over-the-counter and illicit substances in 2002*, National Drug Strategy Monograph Series No. 56, Canberra, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, available at <http://www.nationaldrugstrategy.gov.au/pdf/mono56.pdf>

Resources

Activity 2.2: Statements and Responses, cut into cards

Description of activity

Cut out an appropriate set of statements and responses to match the number of people attending the event. It is possible to have people with the same statements and responses.

Give each person a statement or response and ask them to walk around the room until they have found their matching partner.

Suggest to the people with the response that they should first decide whether their statement is true or false, and ask the people they approach to do the same.

Once everyone has his/her matching response, ask the participants to read out their statements with the corresponding response.

Take this opportunity to discuss why many people often overestimate drug use in young people.

Discuss what might be the implications of myths and misunderstandings for how parents might approach drug-related issues with their children.

Activity 2.2 (a): Statements and Responses (Upper primary/Lower secondary)

Statements	
1.	In 2004, about 7 out of 100 12–15-year-olds were daily smokers.
2.	Among 12-year-old secondary school students a greater proportion of males than females had smoked in the previous 12 months.
3.	In 2002, more 15-year-old female secondary school students had smoked in the previous week than male secondary school students of the same age.
4.	Between 1996 and 2002, the number of 12–15-year-old secondary school students who smoked increased.
5.	In 2004, the pharmaceutical most commonly used for non-medical purposes by Australians aged 14–19 years was most likely to be pain-killers/analgesics.
6.	In 2004, more males than females aged 14–19 years had used analgesics for non-medical purposes in the past 12 months.
7.	In 2004, 60 per cent of 12–15-year-olds did not drink alcohol.
8.	In 2004, males aged 14–19 drank more alcohol than females aged 14–19.

Responses	
1.	*False*: The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare *Statistics on Drug Use in Australia 2004* reported that 2 per cent of 12–15-year-olds were daily smokers.[1]
2.	*True*: The *Survey of the smoking behaviours of Australian secondary students in 2002* reported that among 12-year-olds a greater proportion of males than females had smoked in the previous 12 months, however from the age of 13, the proportion of female students smoking in the past year, was equal to or greater than that for male students.[2]
3.	*True*: In 2002, 20 per cent of 15-year-old females had smoked in the previous week compared to 15 per cent of males of the same age.[2]
4.	*False*: The *Survey of the smoking behaviours of Australian secondary students in 2002* reported a decrease in smoking prevalence between 1996 and 2002 among 12–15-year-olds.[2]
5.	*True*: According to the 2004 *National Drug Strategy Household Survey,* pain-killers/analgesics were more likely to be used for non-medical purposes by Australians aged 14–19 than any other pharmaceutical drug.[3]
6.	*False*: According to the 2004 *National Drug Strategy Household Survey,* 4.2 per cent of females aged 14–19 years had used analgesics for non-medical purposes in the past 12 months compared with 1.9 per cent of males.[3]
7.	*False*: The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare *Statistics on Drug Use in Australia 2004* reported that 68 per cent of 12–15-year-olds did not drink alcohol.[1]
8.	*True*: According to the 2004 *National Drug Strategy Household Survey,* males aged 14–19 years drank more than females on both a daily and weekly basis.[3]

Source: 1. AIHW (2005) Cat. No. PHE 62; 2. White and Hayman (2004) Mon. No. 54; 3. AIHW (2005) Cat. No. PHE 66

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Activity 2.2 (b): Statements and Responses (Lower/Middle secondary)

Statements
1. In 2004, 11 per cent of 16–17-year-olds smoked daily.
2. In 2002, a significant shift downward in the smoking behaviours of older secondary school students was noted for the first time since 1990.
3. In 2004, males aged 14–19 drank more alcohol than females of the same age.
4. In 2004, 25 per cent of 12–15-year-olds had used cannabis in the previous 12 months.
5. In 2004, the majority of 16–17-year-old secondary school students had tried amphetamines.
6. In 2002, about 10 per cent of 12–17-year-old secondary school students had used amphetamines in the previous week.
7. In 2002, less than 1 per cent of secondary school students aged 12–17 had used opiates such as heroin in the past week.
8. In 2002, less than 5 per cent of secondary school students aged 12–17 had ever used opiates.
Responses
1. *True*: The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare *Statistics on Drug Use in Australia 2004* reported that 11 per cent of 16–17-year-olds were daily smokers.[1]
2. *True*: The *Survey of the smoking behaviours of Australian secondary students in 2002* reported a significant shift downward in the smoking behaviours of older students for the first time since 1990.[2]
3. *True*: According to the 2004 *National Drug Strategy Household Survey*, males aged 14–19 years drank more than females of the same age on both a daily and weekly basis.[3]
4. *False*: The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare *Statistics on Drug Use in Australia 2004,* reported that 18 per cent of 16–17-year-olds had used cannabis in the last 12 months.[1]
5. *False*: The 2002 Australian secondary students' use of over-the-counter and illicit substances survey reported that 10.3 per cent of 16- and 17-year-old students had tried amphetamines.[4]
6. *False*: The *Australian secondary students' use of over-the-counter and illicit substances in 2002* survey reported that about 1.5 per cent of 12–17-year-old students had used amphetamines in the previous week.[4]
7. *True*: The *Australian secondary students' use of over-the-counter and illicit substances in 2002* survey reported that 0.8 per cent of students aged 12–17 had used opiates such as heroin in the previous week.[4]
8. *True*: The *Australian secondary students' use of over-the-counter and illicit substances in 2002* survey reported that 2.7 per cent of students aged 12–17 had ever used opiates.[4]

Source: 1. AIHW (2005) Cat. No. PHE 62; 2. White and Hayman (2004) Mon. No. 54; 3. AIHW (2005) Cat. No. PHE 66; 4. White, V. and Hayman, J. (2004) Mon. No. 56

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2.3 Quiz

This quiz includes three rounds of questions. It can be run in a number of formats, including:

- TV quiz programme with a compere, prizes, etc
- trivia rounds, where parents work in small groups and discuss their answers.

Students' involvement can include reading the questions, hosting the activity, participating as contestants alongside adults, scoring, acting as adjudicators on a panel, or distributing prizes.

Aims

- To provide participants with some drug knowledge.
- To provide opportunities for student facilitation.

Issues to consider

- A quiz activity can add an element of fun to the event and is well suited to student facilitation. It provides an opportunity to involve students who may be less confident with public speaking.
- The focus of a quiz activity is not necessarily on getting all the answers correct but allowing for participation and conversation with the audience. Many of the questions rely on collaboration/discussion with the team contestants rather than exact answers.
- Teams of three people work well as this involves more people and allows them to feel more relaxed. Often having just adults as contestants and students running the quiz can also work well.
- Setting up a panel of student/teacher adjudicators allows young people to be the 'experts' in the process and adds to their sense of involvement.
- Students can design the quiz questions as a classroom activity. This provides opportunities to explore issues related to coping with changes and challenges. Some questions and answers are provided in Activity 2.3 Rounds.
- Questions in the quiz can take a focus on parenting, drug or transition issues, depending on the school community.
- The quiz can be presented as a PowerPoint presentation.
- A quiz is a good way to end an evening as they tend to have a light-hearted focus.

Tips

- Run as many rounds of questions as time permits. To include as many people as you can, involve a new set of contestants for each round.

- In many cases, when a teacher or other adult works with the student adjudicators, students' confidence will be increased and a collaborative approach will be encouraged.

Activity 2.3 Quiz (Years 5–7)

Resources

Activity 2.3: Rounds

Description of activity

Each question is worth up to 5 points, depending on the quality of the answer given. An adjudicating panel can decide the score for each. For example, the panel may choose to award an answer 4 out of 5, but must provide an explanation to justify this.

At the end of each round the winning team is awarded a small prize.

Activity 2.3: Rounds

Round 1

1. Name any drug starting with the letter ‘p’.
2. What does your blood alcohol content measure?
3. What drug can be made from grapes?
4. Name any product that contains caffeine.
5. Analgesics are commonly called what?
6. Why can you buy some medicines at the supermarket yet others need a prescription?
7. Name three ways in which people try to quit smoking.
8. What age do you need to be before you can buy cigarettes over the counter?
9. Name two ways people try to prevent harm from drug and alcohol use.
10. Imagine a student in Year 7 is being bullied by other kids. Describe three helpful things you could do.

Answers to Round 1

1. Panadol, pethidine, Pot.
2. The level of alcohol present in your bloodstream.
3. Wine.
4. Cola drinks, chocolate bars.
5. Headache tablets.
6. Medications which require supervision from a doctor require a prescription to prevent them being used in a harmful way.
7. ‘Cold turkey’, nicotine patches, hypnosis.
8. 18.
9. Don’t drink and drive, don’t drink too much in one sitting, eat properly, drink water between alcoholic drinks.
10. Speak to an adult, support the person, involve the person in other activities, speak to parents.

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Activity 2.3: Rounds, cont.

Round 2

1. What is the name of the drug found in the following: chocolate, coke, coffee?
2. Why aren't athletes allowed to take certain types of drugs when they are competing?
3. Name three ways in which using drugs can be helpful.
4. Name three ways in which using drugs can be harmful.
5. What level of alcohol is a person on 'P' plates permitted to have in their blood?
6. Name an illness related to heavy smoking.
7. There has been a lot of talk about the dangers of binge drinking – what do you think this is and name a danger associated with it?
8. What would smoking do to your heart rate – make it go up or down?
9. Describe three things you could do if you always seemed to have more homework than you could manage.
10. Give an example of a legal and an illegal drug.

Answers to Round 2

1. Caffeine.
2. It may give them an advantage which is unfair as it is a result of the performance drug rather than the skill of the athlete.
3. Medicinal, relaxing effect, social occasions, celebration.
4. Physical fights, illness, injury, overdose.
5. Zero.
6. Lung cancer.
7. Excessive consumption in one sitting; dangers are illness, fights, violence, physical injury.
8. Up.
9. Ask an adult for help, speak to the teacher or parent, make a plan each week.
10. Legal: tobacco; illegal: cannabis.

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Activity 2.3: Rounds, cont.

Round 3

1. Suggest a way to get rid of a headache, apart from taking a 'headache tablet'.
2. Name three ways in which secondary school is very different to primary school.
3. Medicines can be harmful if taken by young children. What are some of the ways that prevent this from happening?
4. If you found a syringe lying in the schoolyard, what should you do?
5. Explain why drinking alcohol makes you a dangerous driver?
6. When was the first Australian beer can produced?

Answers to Round 3

1. Relax or lie down, drink some water, stay out of the sun, have a massage.
2. More teachers, more subjects, more homework, often school is bigger.
3. Clear labels on bottles, tamper-proof lids, kept away from children.
4. Tell a teacher, don't pick it up.
5. You take longer to react to unexpected situations.
6. 1959.

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2.4 Drug Quiz – Myth Busters

This quiz includes two rounds, each with 10 multiple choice questions. An additional mini-quiz of 8 questions is also provided for those who may want to focus on alcohol-related information and issues in their event. The quiz questions can easily be adapted to meet the specific needs and priorities of students and parents.

The quiz can be run in a number of formats, including:

- TV quiz programme with a compere, prizes, etc
- trivia rounds, where parents work in small groups and discuss their answers.

Student involvement can include reading the questions, hosting the activity, participating as contestants alongside adults, scoring, acting as adjudicators on a panel, or distributing prizes.

Aim

- To provide participants with some drug knowledge.

Issues to consider

For information about ways you might prepare for this activity, see 'Issues to consider' in Activity 2.3.

Tips

For information about how this activity may be run, see 'Tips' in Activity 2.3.

In preparing for this activity, students can undertake some research and devise their own Myth Buster questions and answers that can be used at the event. Some useful sites to help students access relevant information for creating their own quiz include the following:

www.adf.org.au	Australian Drug Foundation This has up-to-date information and fact sheets.
www.alcohol.gov.au	Department of Health and Ageing This is the Australian government's information site for alcohol.
www.oxygen.org.au	OxyGen This is an interactive site on tobacco and smoking, intended for young people.

Activity 2.4 Drug Quiz — Myth Busters (Years 8–10)

This activity is based on *Creating Conversations*, Activity 9, pp 111–113.)

Resources

Activity 2.4: Rounds

Description of activity

Each question is worth up to 5 points, depending on the quality of the answer given. An adjudicating panel can decide the score for each. For example, the panel may choose to award an answer 4 out of 5, but must provide an explanation to justify this.

At the end of each round the winning team is awarded a small prize.

Rounds 1 and 2 are multiple choice. For each question you are given four possible answers – a, b, c or d – and must select the most correct answer.

Round 3 is a quiz about alcohol.

Activity 2.4: Rounds

Round 1: Multiple Choice

1. What does the term 'horse' refer to? (a) dope (b) LSD (c) Turf. cigarettes (d) heroin	2. In what year was the first Australian beer can produced? (a) 1949 (b) 1954 (c) 1959 (d) 1961
3. What was distinctive about the first Australian beer can? (a) it was in the shape of a kangaroo (b) it held two gallons (c) it had a screw-top (d) it had to be opened with a can-opener	4. Amphetamines affect the body by: (a) slowing it down (b) causing hallucinations (c) speeding it up (d) all of the above
5. Ecstasy used for medicinal purposes: (a) increases appetite (b) provides pain relief (c) acts as a local anaesthetic (d) no medicinal use	6. Caffeine is not present in: (a) chocolate (b) headache tablets (c) sleeping pills (d) tea
7. In small doses, caffeine: (a) lowers body temperature (b) increases urination (c) causes warts to grow (d) increases body hair	8. In 1945, the percentage of men who smoked was approximately: (a) 20 (b) 40 (c) 70 (d) 90
9. Which of the following is correct? (a) memory is not affected by cannabis (b) normal people never have a bad reaction to cannabis (c) high doses of cannabis can cause hallucinations (d) it is not possible to become dependent on cannabis	10. How long does it take the liver to break down the alcohol in one standard drink? (a) 1 minute (b) 1 hour (c) 1 day (d) 1 week

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Activity 2.4: Rounds, cont.

Answers to Round 1

1. (d) heroin
2. (c) 1959
3. (c) it had a screw-top
4. (c) speeding it up
5. (d) no medicinal use
6. (c) sleeping pills
7. (b) increases urination
8. (c) 70
9. (c) high doses of cannabis can cause hallucinations
10. (b) 1 hour

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Activity 2.4: Rounds, cont.

Round 2: Multiple Choice

1. One of the physical effects of using cocaine includes: (a) lower levels of energy (b) increased appetite (c) increased body temperature (d) decreased heart rate	2. How long does it take for nicotine to react on the brain after inhaling cigarette smoke? (a) 30 seconds (b) 2 seconds (c) 7 seconds (d) 2 minutes
3. From which country did coffee originate? (a) Arabia (b) Jamaica (c) Ireland (d) Brazil	4. Ecstasy is MDMA which stands for: (a) Methylenediozymethamphetamine (b) Methylene (c) Methyleamphetamine (d) Methyladone
5. Alcohol is considered a depressant because: (a) you become very sad (b) it slows down messages going to and from the brain (c) you feel sleepy and tired (d) you can forget things that happen	6. How many grams of alcohol in one standard drink? (a) 1 (b) 10 (c) 100 (d) 1000
7. Which of the following helps a drinker to sober up? (a) cold shower (b) drinking strong coffee (c) fresh air (d) time	8. Is alcohol: (a) a stimulant (b) a depressant (c) a hallucinogen (d) all of the above?
9. Most adults who drink alcohol: (a) get drunk (b) behave badly (c) vomit (d) drink in a safe way	10. Which of the following is not a tranquilliser? (a) valium (b) sleeping tablets (c) Prozac (d) No-Doz

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Activity 2.4: Rounds, cont.

Answers to Round 2

1. (c) increased body temperature
2. (c) 7 seconds
3. (a) Arabia
4. (a) Methylenediozymethamphetamine
5. (b) it slows down messages going to and from the brain
6. (b) 10
7. (d) time
8. (b) a depressant
9. (d) drink in a safe way
10. (d) No-Doz

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Activity 2.4: Rounds, cont.

Round 3: Alcohol Quiz

1. Give three reasons why young people choose to drink.
2. Give three reasons why young people choose not to drink.
3. What organ in the body breaks down alcohol?
4. What does your blood alcohol content measure?
5. Explain why too much alcohol can give someone a hangover
6. Most adults who drink alcohol:
   (a) get drunk
   (b) behave badly
   (c) vomit
   (d) drink in a safe way
7. Is alcohol:
   (a) a stimulant
   (b) a depressant
   (c) a hallucinogen
   (d) all of the above?
8. Explain why drinking on an empty stomach is potentially harmful.

Answers to Round 3

1. Fun, to relax, curiosity
2. Don't like the taste, sport commitments, don't want to get into trouble.
3. The liver.
4. The amount of alcohol present in your blood.
5. Alcohol draws fluid from the cells and dehydration which causes the headache.
6. Most adults who drink alcohol (d) drink in a safe way.
7. Alcohol is (b) a depressant.
8. Without food in your stomach, the alcohol is absorbed into the body at a much higher rate so a person can get drunk much more quickly. Sometimes the body tries to adapt to this by vomiting to get rid of too much alcohol too quickly.

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3. Problem solving and communication skills activity options

Teacher-focused ⟷ Student-focused				
3.1 Video Triggers (a) Can I Go To Shari's? (Years 5–7) (b) Why Won't You Let Me Pick You Up? (Years 6–8) (c) Did You Get Drunk? (Years 8–10) (d) Can I Go? (Years 8–10)		3.2 The Hot Seat (Years 5–10)		3.3 Hidden Thoughts and Peer Coaching Discussion (Years 8–10)
The four triggers provide dilemmas to initiate discussion at a parent event on how parents and young people can communicate on issues related to safety, health and wellbeing.		Dilemma role play. A volunteer from the parent event is faced with a dilemma, listens to the arguments for and against a course of action, and is asked to make a decision. Adult-led facilitation with student involvement as role-play actors (for and against).		Role play that unpacks the hidden thoughts of the characters in a scenario providing an opportunity to explore communication barriers that parents and young people can face, including those around drug-related issues.

3

3.1 Video Triggers (Years 5–10)

You'll find four scenarios on the accompanying *Building Conversations* video/DVD. They are:

(a) Can I Go To Shari's? (Years 5–7) (01:01:06:00 to 01:01:08:00)

(b) Why Won't You Let Me Pick You Up? (Years 6–8)
(01:01:08:00 to 01:09:45:00; 01:17:24:00 to 01:19:10:00)

(c) Did You Get Drunk? (Years 8–10) (01:19:10:00 to 01:21:02:00)

(d) Can I Go? (Years 8–10) (01:21:02:00 to 01:23:21:00).

(Video scenarios (b) and (d) are from *Talking It Over*, and have been included on the *Building Conversations* video/DVD with permission.)

Aims

- To provide an opportunity for parents to discuss and propose useful behaviours for managing a challenging situation communicating with their children.
- To support parents' understanding of communication barriers that can occur between them and their children around a range of issues, including those dealing with drugs.
- To provide guidelines and practice in the skills parents need to communicate with their children on drug-related issues.
- Note that each trigger can be used to achieve additional aims specific to the scenario. These are indicated at the start of each video trigger option.

Issues to consider

- The video triggers are followed by suggested facilitated discussion and group activities to address the activity aims.
- This is largely an adult-facilitated activity; however, there is capacity for students to act as group leaders in the discussion activities.
- Be aware of the needs of the audience.

Tip

- Set some ground rules for this activity, and explain that it is an opportunity for parents to hear, contribute and learn from others.

Activity 3.1 Video Triggers (Years 5–10)

Video Trigger (a): 'Can I Go To Shari's?' (Years 5–7)

A 12-year-old girl tries to persuade her mother to allow her to stay over at her friend's place where older teenagers will be having a party.

Aims

To provide an opportunity for parents to:

- discuss and propose useful behaviours for managing challenging situations communicating with their children
- discuss parties and the challenge of parents giving more freedom while setting clear limits
- explore their understanding of communication barriers that can occur between them and their children around a range of issues, including those involving drugs.

Resources

Building Conversations video/DVD ('Can I Go To Shari's?', 01:01:06:00 to 01:01:08:00)

Description of activity

View the Video Trigger: 'Can I Go To Sharis?'

Organise the audience into small groups. The groups may include young people.

Ask the groups to discuss and record answers to the following questions:

1. How well do you think Sally's mum deals with this situation? Why?
2. What are parents' 'fears' in relation to their children going to parties?
3. Sally seemed to expect that her mother would not be happy about the idea. How might Sally's mum have made her expectations apparent to Sally in the past? How can parents set boundaries for their children?
4. How can parents help guide their children in life without trying to control them?
5. How can parents help their children to develop resilience and overcome challenges and disappointments in life?
6. The desire to go to teenage parties may start at varying ages. How do parents know when to let their teenagers go to parties?

Video Trigger (b): 'Why Won't You Let Me Pick You Up?' (Years 6–8)

A 14-year-old boy tries to persuade his mother not to pick him up from a party.

Aims

To provide an opportunity for parents to:

- discuss and propose useful behaviours for managing challenging situations communicating with their children
- discuss the issue of safe travel to and from events
- explore their understanding of communication barriers that can occur between them and their children around a range of issues, including those dealing with drugs.

Resources

Building Conversations video/DVD ('Why Won't You Let Me Pick You Up?', 01:01:08:00 to 01:09:45:00; 01:17:24:00 to 01:19:10:00)

Activity 3.1(a): Barriers

Description of activity

View the Video Trigger: 'Why Won't You Let Me Pick You Up?'

Organise the audience into small groups. The groups may include young people.

Distribute copies of Activity 3.1(a) Barriers, for the groups to complete.

Ask the groups to discuss and record their answers to the following questions.

1. What are some strategies for getting young people home safely?
2. How can parents support other parents in this process?
3. In the list provided, what are some of the barriers that may need to be managed or negotiated before offers of parental support will be accepted?
4. What role can young people play in this process?

Activity 3.1 (a): Barriers

Below is a list of barriers to open talk between young people and their parents. It has been developed in consultation with young people.

In your group/pairs, rate each one as high, medium or low. Add any others that might apply for young people seeking parental support.

Sometimes young people don't feel they can talk openly with their parents as they fear that their parents will: [20]

Barrier	**High**	**Medium**	**Low**
Worry too much			
Be shocked or disapproving			
Give them a lecture or tell them off			
Not let them go			
Ask too many questions			
Make judgments about their friends			
Not let them mix with certain friends			
Think they won't be able to look after themselves			
Find out what some are doing and think it is everyone			
Find out what's going on and not let them go again			
Not trust them any more			
Not be interested			
Be too busy			
Have too many of their own worries			
Add other barriers here:			

[20] Source: *Talking It Over, Facilitator's Manual,* OHP 4.

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Video Trigger (c): 'Did You Get Drunk?' (Years 8–10)

A girl's parents discover that she has been at a party where there was heavy drinking.

Aims

To provide an opportunity for parents to:

- discuss alcohol use in young people
- discuss and propose useful behaviours for managing challenging situations communicating with their children.

Resources

Building Conversations video/DVD ('Did You Get Drunk?', 01:19:10:00 to 01:21:02:00)

Activity 3.1(b): Communication Advice

Description of activity

View the Video Trigger: 'Did You Get Drunk?'

Organise the audience into small groups. The groups may include young people.

Distribute copies of Activity 3.1(b) Communication Advice, for the groups to complete.

Ask the groups to discuss and record their answers to the following questions.

1. What advice would you offer to a parent in this situation?
2. What would be useful to have communicated to a young person before an event like this?
3. What are the five most useful tips from the communication advice sheet for a situation like this one?

Ask the group to add five bits of communication advice for young people. Add these to the sheet.

Activity 3.1 (b): Communication Advice

Do's and Don'ts for parents	
DO	**DON'T**
Choose a calm moment	Don't make it a lecture
Bring up the conversation in general	Don't do all your talking at the time of a request or a wrongdoing
Arrange with your child a suitable time to talk and tell them what you want to talk about	Don't wait until they are in trouble
Ask them to predict what they might have to deal with	Don't do all the thinking for them
Find out about their needs and wishes	Don't assume you know how it is for them
Be honest about your needs, fears and wishes	Don't expect them to be open if you are not
When making an agreement try to find a number of different options to choose from	Don't assume there is only one arrangement that will work
Be clear about the rules	Don't apply rules inconsistently between siblings
Get to know their friends	Don't judge their friends without knowing them
Make sure they know they can ask you for help	Don't assume they think you are approachable
Plan emergency responses with them, eg how to leave a party if harm is likely	Don't leave them to work it out when the time comes and then blame them if they handle it badly
Tell them which behaviours you think are dangerous	Don't exaggerate dangerous behaviours or situations
Understand it is not always easy to 'do the right thing'	Don't assume that knowing what to do and actually doing it are the same thing
Ask if they are okay	Don't assume it is easy for them
Model safe practice yourself	Don't judge them by different standards from your own
Dos and Don'ts for young people	
DO	**DON'T**

Adapted from *Talking It Over, Facilitator's Manual*, pp 25–26.

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Video Trigger (d): 'Can I Go?' (Years 8–10)

A father is put on the spot to give his daughter and her friends permission to go to a party.

Aims

- To provide an opportunity for parents to discuss and propose useful behaviours for managing challenging situations communicating with their children
- To provide guidelines and practice in the skills parents need to communicate with young people on drug-related issues.

Resources

Building Conversations video/DVD ('Can I Go?', 01:12:02:00 to 01:23:21:00)

Activity 3.1(a): Barriers

Description of activity

View the Video Trigger: 'Can I Go?'

Organise the audience into groups of six to eight people. The groups may include young people.

Distribute copies of Activity 3.1(a) Barriers, for the groups to complete.

Ask the groups to discuss and record their answers to the following questions.

1. What advice would you offer to the father in this situation?
2. What are parents' 'fears' in relation to their teenagers going to parties?
3. Much is sometimes made of the 'party' scene for young people. How might parents help other parents deal with issues around safety and wellbeing for their children? Suggest some strategies.
4. The desire to go to teenage parties may start at varying ages. How do parents know when to let their teenagers go to parties?
5. What might teenagers fear about going to parties?

3.2 The Hot Seat

This activity involves a role play where a young person is faced with a dilemma, listens to the arguments for and against a course of action, and is asked to make a decision based on these arguments. In the activity, a group of students may perform a role play, or a parent volunteer from the audience may take the place of the young person with the students acting as the 'for' and 'against' voices. This is followed by an adult-facilitated discussion with the participants on the issues and possible implications for challenges, needs and fears of young people and parents around safety and wellbeing decisions.

Aims

- To demonstrate competing influences at play in the decision-making process, in particular when making decisions quickly and in circumstances where the person feels pulled in different directions.
- To demonstrate the variety of thoughts common to young people in these situations.
- To encourage parents to understand and explore the issues young people face and the decisions they may make on a range of issues related to their health and wellbeing.

Issues to consider

- Sample dilemmas and arguments are provided for Years 5–7 in Activity 3.2(a) Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments, and for Years 8–10 in Activity 3.2(c) Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments. Extra scenarios are provided for Years 5–7 in Activity 3.2(b) Additional sample dilemmas, and for Years 8–10 in Activity 3.2(d) Additional sample dilemmas. Ensure you choose a dilemma that is suitable for your particular school community, or work with students and others to devise your own.
- This activity will benefit from an initial run through, for example at a staff meeting, as this will provide a chance for rehearsal and will promote the parent event to other school staff.
- The dilemmas can be scripted with further input from students, or students can collectively write responses to a dilemma. In either case, it is important that the work is vetted by a teacher.
- The focus of this activity is on exploring the pros and cons attached to the dilemma, and opening these up for consideration by the audience. The decision made about how to respond to the dilemma is not really important because it is dependent on the quality of the arguments.

- Avoid using the terms 'good' and 'bad' or 'angel' and 'devil' in relation to the 'consciences', as this places a value judgment on the decisions made. They are better described as 'for' and 'against'. Remind students that the focus is on staying safe, not on whether it is right or wrong to use drugs.
- If you feel the audience is ready for it, you can invite some adults to become the voices and perhaps get students to help them out.
- The Hot Seat is useful for leading into an event discussion on the types of issues and challenges young people can face, as well as their need to:
  - build resilience
  - make decisions
  - be assertive
  - apply knowledge and skills in real life situations that may include expectations of friends, danger or impaired judgment.

Tips

This activity is demonstrated in the accompanying *Building Conversations* video/DVD ('Can I Go?', 01:12:02:00 to 01:23:21:00). The video/DVD shows examples from both a primary and a secondary school parent event. It is highly recommended that when preparing for an event, particularly one involving a Hot Seat activity, you review both examples to support your professional development. This segment of the video demonstrates:

- ways of working with students in the classroom to prepare and devise their own Hot Seat scenarios
- upper primary students undertaking a Hot Seat at a parent event
- secondary students undertaking a Hot Seat at a parent event
- the way the adult facilitator might use the Hot Seat to launch into a discussion with event participants
- some key tips and ideas on how the Hot Seat can be usefully developed and run at a parent event to stimulate important considerations in young people and parents on dilemmas and decision making.

Sample questions to facilitate discussion on completion of the Hot Seat role play are provided in Activity 3.2 (a) Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments. These may be adapted to different scenarios.

Do not include a dilemma that is something the school has experienced in the recent past and which may alienate some of the audience or be seen to be judgmental.

Activity 3.2 The Hot Seat (Years 5–10)

Resources

A 'Hot Seat' dilemma and arguments for and against
Make sure you choose a dilemma that is appropriate to the age and stage of the students and to the school context.

Activity 3.2 (a) and (b) Hot Seat dilemmas designed for students in Years 5–7

Activity 3.2 (c) and (d) Hot Seat dilemmas designed for students in Years 8–10

- Room arranged so that the 'Hot Seat' (a chair) is placed in a position that can be seen by the audience.

Description of activity

This activity is from *Creating Conversations* pp 92ff. [22]

The facilitator invites a volunteer to sit in the chair, facing the audience.

Note that your 'volunteer' may be a student who has rehearsed with the students who are to make the 'for' and 'against' arguments.

The volunteer reads a Hot Seat dilemma and must try to become the identity in that scenario. A person stands either side of the Hot Seat. Their role is to be the 'for' and 'against' thoughts of the volunteer. The volunteer listens to the arguments given by the people on either side of the chair, and must attempt to block out his/her own thoughts and make a decision based only on the arguments heard. (This is a bit like a debate happening between the arguments 'for' and 'against'.) The volunteer must choose which person has made the most persuasive point/s.

When the arguments have been heard, the facilitator asks the volunteer to talk about the thoughts that were going through his/her mind, what influenced them and, where appropriate, the decision he/she would make.

The facilitator can then turn to the audience for any further advice they might offer to the characters in the scenario.

Discussion questions

Questions could include:

1. What advice would you give to a person in this situation?
2. What are some other possible arguments that could be relevant in this situation?
3. How realistic is a situation like this?

[22] State of Victoria (2002) *Creating Conversations Training Manual*, Student Wellbeing Branch, Department of Education and Training, Melbourne, Vic.

Activity 3.2 (a): Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments

1. You are in your first year of high school and you walk past a group of pretty tough Year 10 students who are smoking. Instead of intimidating you they offer you a cigarette. Do you take one? (Source: *Creating Conversations,* p 92)

For	**Against**
Just take it and try it – it won't hurt	Smoking is stupid; you don't have to smoke to be cool.
It's just one cigarette and they'll be so impressed.	You don't even know how to smoke. How embarrassing if you start choking.
You can't get hooked on one and you only need to have a few puffs.	It only takes one to start and you can become addicted very quickly.
You'll be the most popular kid with the Year 7s if you hang out with these guys.	You could get lung cancer. Haven't you seen those ads on TV?
You won't have to buy any. They want you to have one of theirs.	Yeah, that's at first. If you start smoking it's going to cost you a lot of money.
Smoking helps calm your nerves.	Smoking is a stimulant; it speeds up the central nervous system.
It says on the pack that 'smoking harms others' – that's not you.	Haven't you seen those ads on TV? Every cigarette is doing you damage – your teeth will turn yellow and your hair and clothes will stink. Wrinkles around your mouth are not a good look!
You don't even have to inhale if you don't want to.	If you get caught, imagine the trouble you'll be in.
You won't get caught. Kids do it at school all the time. Who's going to see you?	Be an individual, do what you want, not what others think you should do.
You can't get addicted from just one cigarette.	No one is cool with bad breath!

(a) What advice would you give to a person in this situation?

(b) What are some other possible arguments that could be relevant in this situation?

(c) How realistic is a situation like this?

(d) How could parents help young people to prepare for a situation where they may be offered drugs?

(e) What are some strategies parents could use to help young people to understand the short- and long-term health risks that may influence their choices as a young person?

(f) How might parents who are smokers themselves or who have adult smokers in their families tackle these issues?

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Activity 3.2 (a): Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments, cont.

2. You are in your first year of high school and for a while now you have watched a group of other first years intimidate a first-year boy (Rick), who doesn't seem to have many friends. These students are giving Rick a hard time yet again – do you say something?	
For	**Against**
You need to say something; doing nothing is almost as bad.	Don't be ridiculous, these guys will start on you then.
How would you feel if it were you? You'd want someone to help you, and he can't do it alone.	Listen, even if you say something it won't stop, you know what they're like. Saying something could in fact make it worse.
You don't have to say something to them; speak to an adult instead, like Mr ……, he could do something.	So what's the teacher going to do, tell them off and only make it worse?
Look, it's called bullying and that can be really damaging, you know that. Do something, you can't ignore it.	It's not like Rick is getting physically hurt or anything, it's just a bit of "boy's stuff".
Why not speak to Rick, ask him how he's feeling, and see what you can do together.	Yes, but then they might turn on both of you, they'll associate Rick with you. Do you really want that?

(a) What advice would you give to a person in this situation?

(b) What are some other possible arguments that could be relevant in this situation?

(c) How realistic is a situation like this?

(d) What role might a parent have in this situation if their child turned to them for help? (Note that research says kids are more likely to tell a friend or parent before they would a teacher.)

(e) How could parents help young people to prepare for a situation where they are faced with bullying?

(f) How might contact with a secondary school differ from contact with a primary school in relation to taking action about reported or known bullying? What advice can you offer to parents?

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Activity 3.2 (a): Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments, cont.

3. You are a 13-year-old girl who has been babysitting and is going to be driven home by a parent who might be tipsy. Do you accept the lift?	
For	**Against**
He's always been nice, so it'll be okay.	Don't get into the car, he's drunk and will probably have an accident.
It's late and you need a lift home. Do you really want to ring your parents this late?	You can catch a cab.
You can't afford a cab. You need that money for other things.	This could be a life and death situation, do you want to end up in a wheelchair?
You will be safe, you can take care of yourself, just make sure he concentrates when he drives.	It doesn't matter what you do, he will still be driving the car. You don't have any control over that!
You only live down the road – you won't even be in the car for very long.	Most accidents happen within 500 metres of your home – it's a well known fact.

(a) What advice would you give to a person in this situation?

(b) What are some other possible arguments that could be relevant in this situation?

(c) How realistic is a situation like this?

Questions could centre around the role of parents in helping to keep young people safe in potentially harmful situations.

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Activity 3.2 (a): Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments, cont.

4. You are 10 years old and you suffer from asthma. Your best friend's father is driving you to a very important basketball game – your team made it to the semi-finals. He is smoking in the car and you are concerned about your asthma. Do you ask him to stop? (Adapted from *Creating Conversations,* p 99)

For	**Against**
You have to say something, you'll have an asthma attack and won't be able to play.	You can't tell him what to do, he is an adult.
Just ask him to wait until you get to the game.	It's his car and therefore his choice.
He'll think you are being responsible.	He'll think you're being a smart alec.
If you wind down the window, the cold air with the smoke will do the same thing!	Just wind down the window and let some air in.
Imagine losing the game, because you run out of breath.	Look, just start coughing a lot and maybe he'll get the hint.
Come on, you need to be more assertive, stand up for yourself. When it comes to your health, you can't compromise.	Stop whinging, it's only 10 minutes away.
Ten-year-olds have rights too, you know.	You'll end up looking like a whinger; just put up with it.

(a) What advice would you give to a person in this situation?

(b) What are some other possible arguments that could be relevant in this situation?

(c) How realistic is a situation like this?

(d) What role do teachers and parents have in helping young people to be appropriately assertive?

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Activity 3.2 (a): Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments, cont.

The following Hot Seat dilemma is modelled (the *Building Conversations* video/DVD 00:13:00:00 to 00:17:44:00).

5. You are at your cousin's place for a family birthday. Some of the adults have left an open bottle of champagne on the kitchen table and everyone is outside in the backyard. Your cousin encourages you to have a taste of the champagne. Do you try it?

For	**Against**
Give it a try, it's just a taste and it won't kill you.	It might taste yucky.
So what, you can't say 'no' to your cousin, he'll think you're a nerd!	What, so you are just going to try it because your cousin wants you to. Make your own choice, be an individual.
Take a sip, say it tastes good and then be done with it.	One sip could lead to two and then a whole glass and you'll end up drunk.
Well, your cousin will look after you.	You think your cousin will calm your parents down when they find you drunk – I don't think so!
Go on, you're nearly 10 years old.	Your parents wouldn't like you to try it.
Then there's no point – if you're not breaking any rules, where's the fun?	Coke tastes much better anyway.

(a) What advice would you give to a person in this situation?

(b) What are some other possible arguments that could be relevant in this situation?

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Activity 3.2 (b): Additional Sample dilemmas

6.	You're at a friend's place and mucking around outside on a really hot day. Your friend's mother offers to take you to the local pool. You've had a very bad headache for the last 10 minutes and don't feel well but you don't want to miss out on a swim. Your friend offers you a couple of pain-killers. Do you take them?
7.	You are a parent of a 12-year-old girl (Jess). Jess wants to go to an open-air concert during the day with her friends. You have some big concerns about it. Do you let her go?
8.	You are a parent and you are quite worried about your 13-year-old daughter (Justine). Recently Justine has been very secretive and has stopped talking to you; she is also getting into trouble at school. You wonder whether she is using some type of drug. You have tried talking to her about your concerns but she just gets angry and shuts down. While cleaning her room, you come across her personal diary. Do you read it? (From: *Creating Conversations,* p 94)
9.	On the way to school, Maria wants you to join in with smoking a couple of cigarettes she has brought from her dad's supply at home. Do you try one?
10.	You've been running around all lunchtime playing soccer with your friends and are really puffed out. Your best friend, who has asthma, offers you his ventolin spray. He says it is harmless and it will make you breathe easier. Do you take it?

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Activity 3.2 (c): Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments

1. You are 17 years old and you and four of your friends have been invited to spend the weekend at a friend's beach house. There will be no adults there and the main reason for going is to try marijuana for the first time. Do you accept the invitation? (From: *Creating Conversations*, p 93)

For	**Against**
It's best to try it when you have friends with you, so go on, do it.	What if someone gets sick or hurt?
Your friends will be there if you get into trouble.	Yeah, get into trouble, that's what will happen if your parents find out. They will be furious.
It could be a lot of fun.	I don't think sitting in the corner stoned off your head is having fun!
It's just you and you friends – there's no way your parents will find out.	It's not legal, you know.
Don't be such a nerd, it's just a bit of dope, you can't get hooked on it.	You could trigger a mental illness, you know, schizophrenia.
Everyone knows a bit of dope doesn't cause serious harm. What damage could trying it do?	What if you are allergic to it and have an extreme reaction. Who will look after you then?
You'll spend the rest of your life wondering what it was like. Here's your opportunity.	Heard of a psychosis? That could happen to you.
You're old enough to do what you want and this could be a great weekend.	Be an individual, accept the invite, but don't go just to smoke dope.
People will think you're cool.	You might regret this for the rest of your life if something goes wrong.

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Activity 3.2 (c): Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments, cont.

2. You are a parent and you are quite worried about your 15-year-old daughter (Justine). Recently Justine has been very secretive and has stopped talking to you; she is also getting into trouble at school. You wonder whether she is using drugs. You have tried talking to her about your concerns, but she just gets angry and shuts down. While cleaning her room, you come across her personal diary. Do you read it? (Source: *Creating Conversations*, p 94)

For	**Against**
You have to read it; she's your daughter and it could be something serious.	If it were serious she'd tell you. You can't read it, it's her personal diary, not yours.
Just read it and put it back, she'll never know.	There are other ways of finding out; ask her friends.
What if something really bad is going on? You'll be sorry if you don't do something.	Imagine how sorry you'd be if Justine finds out you read her personal diary.
You can't help if you don't know what's going on. Just take a quick look.	How would you like it if someone read your diary?
She probably wants you to read it, because she doesn't know how to tell you.	She'll never trust you again; you'll make the relationship worse.

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Activity 3.2 (c): Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments, cont.

3. You are a 15-year-old girl at a party with three of your friends. It's 11.30 and your father is picking you and your friends up at midnight. Your parents think there is no alcohol at the party, but one of your friends is so drunk she can hardly stand up and she is very likely to vomit in your dad's car. If he found out there was alcohol at the party, you would be in serious trouble. Do you still give her a lift? (Source: *Creating Conversations*, p 95)

For	**Against**
You have to give her a lift, she's your best friend.	You can't give her a lift, your dad will be so angry with you for lying to him.
You can't leave her at the party, she might be taken advantage of.	If she vomits in the car, you'll be grounded for months.
If she vomits, tell your dad she suffers from motion sickness.	Why should you get into trouble for something she did?
If something happens to her, you'll feel very bad.	Get someone else to take her home.
How do you know you can trust someone else to take her home?	She can catch a taxi, just give her the money.
She's too drunk to catch a taxi and what about the cab driver?	Your parents will never trust you again – you told them there was no alcohol, remember?
Friends are supposed to look out for each other. You'd want her to do the same for you, wouldn't you?	It's her responsibility not yours.

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Activity 3.2 (c): Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments, cont.

4. You are a 16-year-old girl at a party with many of your friends. A boy who is considered to be the best looking boy at the party asks you if you'd like a lift home. He has only just turned 18 and has had his licence for a short time; he has also been drinking but doesn't appear drunk. Do you accept the lift? (Source: *Creating Conversations,* p 98)

For	**Against**
He's so hot, you just have to get into that car.	Don't get into the car, he's drunk and will probably have an accident.
It's late and you need a lift home. Do you really want to ring your parents this late?	You can catch a cab.
You can't afford a cab. You need that money for other things.	You don't even know him, this could be a life and death situation. Do you want to end up in a wheelchair?
You will be safe; you can take care of yourself. Just make sure he concentrates when he drives.	He's only just got his licence; he's not a very experienced driver.
You only live down the road; you won't even be in the car for very long.	It's a well-known fact most accidents happen within 500 metres of home.
It will make you more popular. Just think, your friends will be so jealous and everyone will know.	They won't be jealous if you end up in hospital. Haven't you seen those drink driving ads on television?

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Activity 3.2 (c): Hot Seat dilemmas and arguments, cont.

5. You are a parent of a 15-year-old girl (Anna). Anna wants to go to the Big Day Out Concert with her friends. You have some big concerns about it, but do you let her go? (Source: *Creating Conversations*, p 100)

For	**Against**
She's a very responsible 15-year-old and her friends are very nice.	She's 15, that's way too young – anything could happen to her.
You went to concerts when you were her age.	Yes, but things are different now, it's a lot more dangerous.
She will think you don't trust her.	It's not her you don't trust, it's others at the concert. Tell her that.
You have to let go sometime.	What about the alcohol and drugs you hear about at these events?
Set rules and limits and then let her go, she will be so appreciative, she may even do some housework!	Well the rules are she can go to these events when she is 17, not 15.
Let her go during the day and pick her up before night, or go with her.	What, are you trying to be the cool parent? Just say no.
You need to think about this. You need to talk it over with her before you make a decision.	Buy her a CD, that's better than going.

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Activity 3.2 (d): Additional Sample dilemmas

6.	You are a Year 9 student and for a while now you have watched a group of other Year 9s intimidate a Year 9 boy (Rick), who doesn't seem to have many friends. These students are giving Rick a hard time yet again – do you say something?
7.	You are a 19-year-old boy and your 15-year-old sister is going to a party. You know there will be no adults as the host's parents are on a holiday. Your sister has asked you to buy her some alcohol. Do you buy it for her? (Source: *Creating Conversations*, p 96)
8.	You are a parent of a 16-year-old boy (Johnny), who you have been quite concerned about of late. Johnny has changed his appearance, personality and attitude in the last six months. You think he is mixing with the wrong crowd and possibly using drugs. A friend has offered you this new aerosol spray that can detect whether he is using drugs. Do you use it?
9.	You are an 18-year-old boy/girl. Many of the people you have recently met take ecstasy on a regular basis. You and your friend have been offered half a tablet each just to try it. Do you try it? (Source: *Creating Conversations*, p 97)
10.	You are turning 18 and your parents are letting you have a party. They are providing wine and beer, but they are dead-set they don't want any dope at the party. Some of your friends say dope is much safer than alcohol and that you don't need to tell your parents. Do you ask them not to bring any dope?

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3.3 Hidden Thoughts and Peer Coaching Discussion

This role play unpacks the hidden thoughts of the characters in a scenario and provides an opportunity for participants to devise appropriate communication strategies for potentially difficult situations that may arise between parents and adolescents.

Aims

- To explore thoughts that are not expressed for various reasons but which are none the less significant in their influence on the discussion/communication taking place.
- To encourage parents to explore communication barriers that parents and young people can face, including those involving drug-related issues.
- To provide parents with an opportunity to discuss and develop strategies for addressing communication challenges with their children on drug-related issues.
- To provide guidelines and practice in communication skills.

Issues to consider

- 'Hidden thoughts' promote understanding of the type of needs and fears parents and young people can have around a range of issues that may include drugs. Asking parents/students to put themselves in someone else's shoes can help them to see another perspective and understand another's response. This can help them to make personal decisions in the future. These decisions may be about how they handle or respond to a difficult situation involving their own drug use or that of others.
- The 'hidden thoughts' scenario requires thorough rehearsal.
- This activity will benefit from being run through at a staff meeting as this will provide a chance for rehearsal and promote the parent event to other school staff.
- The scenarios provided are samples only. You may wish to adapt them to better suit your school community. New scenarios can be scripted with input from students. It is important that this work is vetted by a teacher.
- 'Hidden thoughts' scenarios can be played with different levels of humour, depending on the way you want to facilitate the parent event and the school community context.
- This can be a powerful activity when there is time within the event to facilitate parent discussion on hidden thoughts and their possible implications.

- It is recommended that an adult facilitator manage the discussion of the hidden thoughts and any more in-depth discussion. A student facilitator can work in conjunction with the adult facilitator to introduce the 'hidden thoughts' scenario.
- 'Hidden thoughts' can be performed in a number of ways. The hidden thoughts can be explored throughout the scenario by having a person acting as a 'brain' behind each character. To maximise the effect, the 'hidden thoughts' characters can be dressed in black, or respond to the pause and play buttons as on a remote control. Alternatively, you can ask the audience what each character might be thinking but not saying.
- This resource provides two optional 'hidden thoughts' activities and scripts:
  - **Option 1** provides the version of the freeze frame and 'hearing' the hidden thoughts of the characters (the option is demonstrated on the accompanying video/DVD (Hidden Thoughts and Peer Coaching , 00:23:24:00 to 00:59:16:00). The script in the Option 1 role play includes the facilitator script, providing a sample of the kind of questioning a facilitator might take in a 'hidden thoughts' activity.
  - **Option 2** asks the audience to suggest what the hidden thoughts of the characters might be.

Tips

Option 1 of this activity is demonstrated on the accompanying *Building Conversations* video/DVD (Hidden Thoughts and Peer Coaching , 00:23:24:00 to 00:59:16:00). It:

- shows an extended example of how the 'hidden thoughts' activity can be developed and run for a secondary school parent event
- outlines the key guidelines for maximising the value of the 'hidden thoughts' dilemma, and how it can lead to interactive discussion and sharing of strategies for improving communication between parents and young people.

- It is strongly recommended that you review this example to support your professional development. It provides useful strategies that are applicable to both 'hidden thoughts' options presented in this guide, and to facilitation generally. Briefly, it demonstrates:
  - ways of working with students in the classroom to prepare and devise their own 'hidden thoughts' dilemma
  - secondary students acting out a 'hidden thoughts' dilemma at a parent event/forum
  - the way the adult facilitator can:

- ask questions of the 'hidden thoughts' characters so that participants at the event can see behind the surface of the parent/child interaction in the scenario
- ask participants to also consider the fears and hopes of the characters in the scenario and what this might mean for enhancing communication in the future
- ask event participants to brainstorm some suggestions of other ways the characters might have played the scene for a better outcome
- ask the characters to replay the scene using the different approaches suggested in the brainstorm session, which are then discussed by the participants at the event
- debrief the actors and ask them what it felt like to do the scene differently and to interact as parent and child in a different way.

– some tips on how the 'hidden thoughts' dilemma can be usefully developed and run at a parent event to stimulate important considerations in young people and parents on ways of understanding each other's position and of enhancing communication.

Activity 3.3 Hidden Thoughts and Peer Coaching Discussion (Years 8–10)

Description of activity

Provide an introduction to the scenario that explains the scene and how it will work (samples are provided within both options below).

Present the role play.

Ask for feedback from the audience and the characters about what the characters are thinking and feeling at this point. What are their hopes and fears? Having gathered a range of possibilities, ask for suggestions of other ways the characters might have played the scene.

Replay the scene using the gathered suggestions.

Ask for feedback from the characters about how it felt to play the scene this way, and then ask the audience for their response.

Activity 3.3, Option 1: Hidden Thoughts

Note: Option 1 was inspired by the Hidden Thoughts activity in *Creating Conversations, Training Manual* (Activity 6, p101ff).

Father discovers a half bottle of alcohol in his 16-year-old daughter's backpack just before she leaves to go to a party.

Following is a possible introduction for a student facilitator:

> *The next activity is about a 16-year-old girl called Eve and her father. The aim of this activity is to explore what the characters are possibly thinking, but not necessarily saying. Note that each of the characters has a 'brain' behind them.*
>
> *Eve is going to stay over at a friend's place and her dad is driving her there. In the hurry to leave, he picks up her bag and discovers a half bottle of vodka. We take up the scene as Eve comes into the room.*

Role-play script

Characters

Dad

Eve

Dad's brain

Eve's brain

Script

DAD: Right Eve, are you ready to go?

EVE: Coming!

DAD: We haven't got all day!

Dad picks up Eve's bag and, finding it's a bit heavy, looks inside. He finds a half-consumed bottle of vodka.

EVE: What are you doing going through my bag?

DAD: What on earth is this?

EVE: Vodka.

DAD: Where did you get it?

EVE: It's Michelle's.

DAD: It's Michelle's vodka! Where did Michelle get it?

EVE: I don't know.

DAD: What did you plan to do with the vodka?

EVE: I'm giving it back to her tonight.

DAD: You're giving it back to her tonight. You're not going to drink it are you?

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EVE: NO!

DAD: No of course not! You're not planning to go to a party?

EVE: NO! I'm not planning to go to a party!

DAD: Sure! … Sit down. I think we need to have a talk.

FREEZE

Facilitator asks DAD'S BRAIN:

- What is Eve's dad feeling?
- What is he afraid of? What else is he afraid of?
- What is Eve's dad hoping for? What else is he hoping for?
- Does he know what to do and how to handle the situation?

Responses:

FACILITATOR: What is Eve's dad feeling?

DAD'S BRAIN: He's feeling pretty shocked about what he's found and probably a bit of betrayal because she's been lying and he's probably worried if there is anything else she hasn't told him.

FACILITATOR: What is he afraid of?

DAD'S BRAIN: Mostly drinking and smoking and what she might have been doing under the influence of alcohol.

FACILITATOR: What else is he afraid of?

DAD'S BRAIN: That they are breaking apart – she is turning into a woman.

FACILITATOR: What is Eve's dad hoping for?

DAD'S BRAIN: That she'll tell him the truth.

FACILITATOR: Underneath that, what else is he hoping for?

DAD'S BRAIN: Not to let this get in the way of their relationship, not to let it control their lives.

FACILITATOR: Does he know what to do and how to handle the situation?

DAD'S BRAIN: No, he's shocked and he'll probably have difficulty handling it but he wants so stay in charge.

Facilitator asks EVE'S BRAIN

- What is Eve feeling?
- What does she want?
- What is she afraid of? What else is she afraid of?
- What is Eve hoping for? What else is she hoping for?
- How would Eve reassure her dad?

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Activity 3.3, Option 1: Hidden Thoughts, cont.

Responses:

FACILITATOR: What is Eve feeling?

EVE'S BRAIN: Why was her dad going through her bag in the first place? Her space has been invaded.

FACILITATOR: What does she want?

EVE'S BRAIN: She wants him to back off.

FACILITATOR: What is she afraid of?

EVE'S BRAIN: She's afraid she won't get to go to the party and she may lose her friends.

FACILITATOR: What else is she afraid of?

EVE'S BRAIN: She's afraid that she has lost his trust and he will start to try to control her. She would also feel bad because he wouldn't be as close to her as before.

FACILITATOR: What is Eve hoping for?

EVE'S BRAIN: She is hoping for him to forget about it and let her go to the party and she can come home and it will be like it never happened.

FACILITATOR: What else is she hoping for?

EVE'S BRAIN: She is hoping that her dad will give her his pep talk and let her go on.

FACILITATOR: How would Eve reassure her dad?

EVE'S BRAIN: She would say that she is careful about how much she is drinking.

Facilitator throws the questions over to the audience to offer more hidden thoughts.

Facilitator then asks the audience to offer some advice for how to continue with the scene so that it plays out constructively and both sides communicate with each other.

DAD and EVE continue the scene with the audience's advice to stay calm and be honest with each other about their feelings in this situation.

DAD: Look Eve, I know you're growing up, you're going out more and you *do* want to try things like alcohol. How long has that been going on for?

EVE: I don't know, a little while.

DAD: A little while. What does that mean? Months, a couple of months, years?

EVE: A couple of months.

DAD: Has is just been alcohol? No smoking, no … sex?

EVE: Just alcohol.

DAD: This is at parties?

EVE: Mmmm.

DAD: I sort of see your point of view. When I was 16 I went to parties and drank alcohol and smoked but, you know, it's hard for me to find out like this, and, um, I just don't want you getting into any trouble.

FREEZE

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Activity 3.3, Option 1: Hidden Thoughts, cont.

Facilitator asks DAD:

- What's it like trying to open up and talk about your feelings when you are the dad in a situation like this?
- What is still his 'burning question'?
- Is it harder than you thought for dad to take on this advice?

Facilitator asks EVE:

- What's it like for you when your dad sits down and talks like this?
- What do you need to do in this situation?

Facilitator makes the point that both characters need courage to behave in this way.

Facilitator now asks EVE to complete the scene by opening up and being truthful with DAD.

DAD: So, what have you got to say for yourself?

EVE: Sorry I haven't been completely honest with you. I haven't been telling you the complete truth because I wasn't sure how you would react.

DAD: Okay …

EVE: … and, I have been going to some parties and I have been drinking a small amount. I haven't been getting totally out of control and I do stay sensible – that's why there is only half a bottle because I've had it for about a month.

DAD: How long has the drinking been going on for?

EVE: A couple of months.

DAD: Okay. Is there anything else you want to tell me?

EVE shakes her head.

DAD: Thank you for being honest with me.

Facilitator asks DAD:

- What is it like when your daughter starts telling you the truth?
- Do you think a parent is more or less likely to develop trust in his/her child when the child tells the truth?

Facilitator asks EVE:

- What do you think it takes to tell the truth like that?
- Once you started the lines in which you were telling the truth ('I did this … I did that'), how did you feel it was going? Even as a character?

Facilitator wraps up the hidden thoughts and thanks the audience and the actors.

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Activity 3.3, Option 2: Hidden Thoughts

Source: *Creating Conversations, Training Manual*, Activity 6, p 101ff.

Parents arrive home early to find their son smoking marijuana with some friends.

Following is a possible introduction for a student facilitator:

> *The next activity is about a 16-year-old boy called Eddie and his parents, Doug and Olive. The aim of this activity is to explore what the characters are possibly thinking, but not necessarily saying. Note that each of the characters has an 'inner voice'.*
>
> *Eddie has been staying over at a friend's place for the weekend. His friend's parents have discovered the boys smoking marijuana and have contacted Eddie's parents. We take up the scene as Eddie arrives home, unaware of the telephone call, and is confronted by his parents.*

Role-play script

Characters

Mum (Olive)

Dad (Doug)

Son (Eddie)

Script

MUM: You have to speak to him Doug. This is serious. You have to be tough, Doug. You're his father.

DAD: Okay, I will, just take it easy.

MUM: Eddie wouldn't get involved in this sort of thing if you were tougher. It's drugs, Doug, and marijuana is illegal. He is so easily led that boy.

DAD: You need to calm down Olive. He's 16 – time he made his own decisions.

MUM: Don't tell me to calm down Doug.

FREEZE

DAD'S VOICE: Here she goes again, overreacting as usual, now I'm going to have to deal with it.

MUM'S VOICE: Who does Doug think he is telling me to calm down. I have the right to be concerned. I'm his mother.

Eddie enters.

EDDIE: Hi mum, hi dad. I'm so hungry, I could eat a horse.

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Activity 3.3, Option 2: Hidden Thoughts, cont.

MUM: [*Looking closely at Eddie*.] What's wrong with your eyes Eddie?

EDDIE: What are you talking about?

MUM: Eddie, your father wants to have a talk to you. Don't you, Doug?

DAD: Eddie, come and sit down. We need to have a chat.

MUM: Firm, Doug, be firm.

DAD: Now, where have you been tonight, Eddie? Were you with Tom?

EDDIE: What's all this about? Yeah, I was with Tom; kicking the footy at the park.

FREEZE

EDDIE'S VOICE: Oh man, what's going on here? Something's up. I hope it's not bad.

MUM: Oh, bloody hell, Eddie. Where did you get it from?

EDDIE: The footy? Tom's house.

MUM: Don't act smart with me young man. I just got a call from Tom's mother. Do you know how embarrassing this is? I play tennis with these women!

DAD: [*Calmly*.] So where did you get it from Eddie?

EDDIE: I found it when we were walking.

MUM: Where'd you get the boon from then?

EDDIE: It's called a bong mum and Tom's brother lent it to us.

FREEZE

EDDIE'S VOICE: Oh, no, I'm busted now. I can't let them find out I supplied it. I'll just play it cool.

MUM'S VOICE: This is so embarrassing. I can't believe Eddie would do this to me. I'm going to be the talk of the Tennis Club.

DAD: Now Eddie, I hope you're sorry about this.

EDDIE: I am. I'm sorry, okay.

DAD: See, Olive, the boy's sorry.

MUM: [*Yelling*.] Sorry! Sorry is just not good enough. He needs a punishment … and you're going to give it to him.

DAD: If the boy's sorry I think we can trust that he won't do it again. Right, Eddie?

EDDIE: Yeah, right, I won't do it again. Okay, mum, I promise.

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FREEZE

DAD'S VOICE: Geez, I'm missing out on the soccer scores, it would be easier to sort this out when Olive's not around. It's not that bad, Eddie could be doing worse things. It's only dope.

MUM'S VOICE: Why do I always have to be the disciplinarian? Doug always puts his head in the sand when it comes to parenting. I'm sick of being the bad guy.

MUM: I need a bit of back up here, Doug. Why don't you back me up and give the boy a bloody punishment?

DAD: If you calmed down just a bit, we could sort this situation out properly. You just need to settle down, Olive.

MUM: It's all right for you, Doug, you don't have to play tennis with these women tomorrow. They're going to think I'm a bad mother. Eddie, I'm so angry …

STOP

Facilitator questions the audience:

- What are some other possible thoughts the characters might have been having?
- Has anyone got any comment to make about how the parents were handling this situation?
- Olive and Doug did communicate about how they would deal with Eddie, but how else could they have handled the situation?

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4. Help-seeking

Purpose

To provide information on where parents can access further information/ support.

4.1 Parent Pack

Aims

- To provide advice/information to parents on opportunities for further developing parenting skills for nurturing resilience and wellbeing in their children.
- To provide advice/information on agencies and networks that might provide further assistance on drug-related issues for parents who are seeking this.

Issues to consider

- The parent event is not intended to be used to discuss the needs of individual students or families. However, time should be set aside to guide and support parents in understanding where and how they can access additional help if they wish to.
- You can add materials to the REDI – for Parents *Parent Pack* to provide local and specific school community information for accessing information and resources.

Tips

- Unlike the other activities described in this resource, this is not an activity in which parents participate. Rather, the activity occurs *before* the parent event, in the preparation of 'show bag' materials to hand out to parents *at* the event.
- You may want to locate and compile information on local services and agencies which provide assistance and support for families with concerns around drugs and wellbeing.

Let parents know about the REDI–for Parents website at www.redi.gov.au/parents, which has been designed to support parents in nurturing their children's wellbeing, in particular in terms of drug-related harm.

Activity 4.1 Parent Pack

Description of activity

This resource includes a *Parent Pack* with information for parents on licit and illicit drugs, and drug prevention in the family. This material is also included on the CD-ROM provided. You may choose to reproduce this material to distribute at the event.

Be sure to include, in your information to parents, details and brochures from local services which may be of interest to some families.

Students may assist in the distribution of these materials.

Further resources

Sample running sheet

TIME	ACTIVITY	WHO?	LOCATION/ NOTES
6.45 pm	Arrival		
7.00 pm	Introduction	Marcia, Principal and Teresa (Family–School Action Team member)	School hall
7.10 pm	Highlights and challenges	Leo and Maria (students)	School hall
7.30 pm	Hypothetical	Year 9 students, and Jan and Habid (parents)	School hall
7.45 pm	Hidden Thoughts	Actors: Kim, Petra, Tran and Joseph Facilitator: Jason (teacher)	School hall
8.15 pm	Information sharing	Year 10 – Kimberly, Jesse, Dickson and Chris	School hall
8.30 pm	Conclusion and evaluation	Marcia and Victor (welfare coordinator)	School hall
8.45 pm	Refreshments and informal talk	Caterers – student/ parent volunteers	School hall
9.30 pm	CLOSE	Marcia	

Sample evaluation form

Building Conversations evaluation

Student Parent Other_____

1. Overall the parent event was (tick one):

   ☐ very effective ☐ not very effective

   ☐ quite effective ☐ not effective at all

   ☐ effective

   Give reasons for your rating:_____

   _____

2. Please tick the aspects of the event you found most valuable:

   ☐ the communication between students, parents and school personnel

   ☐ the opportunity to share values, attitudes and opinions

   ☐ the knowledge gained about drug-related issues and reducing harm

   ☐ the communication skills gained about discussing drug-related issues

   ☐ other _____

3. Which activities did you find the most useful? Why?

   _____

   _____

4. Which activities did you find the least useful? Why?

   _____

   _____

5. What did you gain from the event?

   _____

   _____

6. What further events or information would you like?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

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Sample invitation

Name of school _____

Dear parents and guardians

You are invited to participate in our parent event.

This event provides students of Year ____ and their parents an opportunity to communicate about drugs and drug-related issues in a safe and non-threatening way. It also provides opportunities for students to develop team-building and facilitation skills. A number of students have been preparing for this event for many weeks and we would appreciate your attendance.

(You might like to briefly indicate some of the events, such as: Come and see a hypothetical about smoking, where tobacco company executive Mr Nick O'Teen tries to justify smoking to Dr Penny Cillin, who claims smoking causes a range of illnesses. Or: Get involved in a 'hot seat' activity and engage in 'agree' and 'disagree' statements.)

Refreshments will be provided, as will child minding (upon request).

Date _____

Time _____

Place _____

_____

_____

_____

Yours truly

Principal

I/we will/will not be attending the parent event.

Number (including students) _____

Child-minding required: yes/no. Number of children _____

(Source: Adapted from *Creating Conversations, Training Manual*, p 162.)

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